GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

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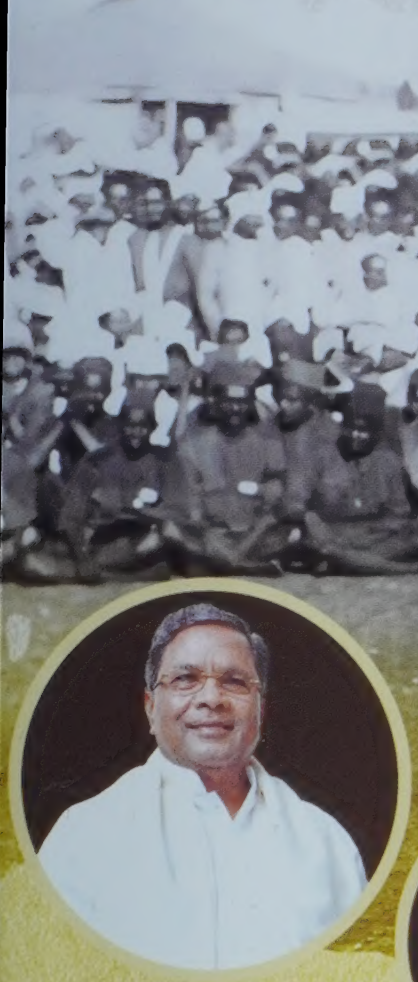
Department of Information & Public Relations



Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

Sri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

RECLAIMING GANDHI BHARAT

1924-2024 Belgaum, Karnataka

DELIVERED AS PROMISED...

Shakthi FREE BUS Service for women across Karnataka

Anna Bhagya 10kg Free Food Grains (per person / per month)

Gruha Jyothi Up to 200 Units of Free Electricity to each home

Gruha Lakshmi ₹2000 per month to female head of the family

Yuva Nidhi ₹3000 Per month for Graduates | ₹1500 Per month for Diploma Holders

Reclaiming Gandhi Bharat

Print: December 2024 I Pages: 58+4 I Copies: 1500

© **Printers & Publishers:**
Commissioner, Department of Information and Public Relations, Bengaluru-01.

Ph: 080 2202 8001/02

dipr.karnataka.gov.in

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Acknowledgement:
The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi as digitized by Servants of knowledge

39th All India Congress Session held in Belagavi-1924;
President Of Session-Mohandas Karamachand Gandhi;
Published by District Administration, Belagavi;
compiled by **R.H.Kulkarni**

Photo courtesy: District Administration, Belagavi

Mahatma Gandhiji arriving at the 1924 Belagavi Congress

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"Our Government's
FIVE GUARANTEE SCHEMES
are an honest effort at making
'Gandhi Bharat'
A Living Reality..."

It is with great pride that we celebrate the centenary of the 1924 Belgaum Congress session, a significant event in our Nation's freedom struggle. Presided over by Mahatma Gandhi, this session aimed to unite people across divides, promote social harmony, and strengthen the independence movement.

Gandhiji's leadership, with a focus on Hindu-Muslim unity, Khadi promotion, and the eradication of untouchability, continues to inspire us. His messages of self-reliance, communal harmony, and social justice are as relevant today as they were then.

As we commemorate this historic event, let us honor the sacrifices made for our freedom and reaffirm our commitment to Gandhiji's ideals of equality, unity, and self-reliance.

I am proud to present this special booklet, which includes Gandhiji's presidential address, his closing speech, and key resolutions from the 39th All India Congress Session held in Belgavi-1924; as a tribute to this pivotal moment.

I extend my best wishes to everyone involved in the centenary celebrations and encourage us to renew our commitment to the values that shaped our nation.

Siddaramaiah
Chief Minister
Karnataka

"It is time to reclaim
'Gandhi's Bharat'
from the clutches of divisive and fascist forces..."

Mahatma Gandhi's influence and role in shaping modern India are indisputable. He has been a beacon of hope, a symbol of resilience, a champion of the downtrodden, and an epitome of truth. His philosophy is as relevant in the 21st century as it was in the previous one. Unfortunately, his teachings and philosophy are increasingly under threat of being swept aside or forgotten.

Divisive forces are destroying the social fabric of our country. Crony capitalism has resulted in income inequality, pushing more and more people into poverty. Injustice and inequality are rising, especially against women. Gandhi would turn in his grave if he were to witness the deterioration of today's India.

There are great lessons for all of us in Gandhi's philosophy of 'Sarva Dharma Sama Bhav,' his deep commitment to simple living, his tireless efforts towards communal harmony, his emphasis on villages, his concept of Sarvodaya, and his vision for a self-reliant and inclusive India.

Gandhi is revered in our country. More than reverence, I believe he would have been happier to see us espouse his philosophy in our day-to-day lives. The Congress Party and our government have been working hard to realize Gandhi's dreams. The five guarantee schemes of our government are a tribute to the Mahatma, who strived hard to empower women and the downtrodden.

Come December 26-27, 2024, it will be 100 years since Mahatma Gandhi presided over the historic convention of the Congress in Belagavi. We are celebrating the 100th anniversary of this historic event in a grand way. There could not be a better tribute to the Mahatma than this book, 'Gandhi Bharata,' which demands our rededication to the cause of the people and our nation.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the authors, researchers, and everyone involved in bringing this insightful and comprehensive work to fruition. May this book serve as a reminder of the enduring values that Gandhi espoused and inspire readers to carry forward his legacy in their own lives.

D.K. Shivakumar
Deputy Chief Minister
Karnataka

Preface

The 1924 Belgaum Congress session, presided over by Mahatma Gandhi, was a defining moment in India's struggle for independence. Held on December 26-27, 1924, this historic gathering under Gandhi's leadership not only marked a significant chapter in the Indian National Congress's history but also reinforced the ideals of non-violence, unity, and constructive work, which would continue to guide the nation in its fight for freedom.

As we commemorate the centenary of this landmark event, the year-long celebration, organized under the leadership of the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Siddaramaiah, offers an important opportunity to reconnect with the values and principles championed by Gandhi during the Belgaum session. This commemoration aims to introduce today's generation to the vision of unity, peace, and self-reliance that were central to Gandhi's leadership, while also reflecting on the lasting impact of these ideals on India's journey toward independence.

The Belgaum session of 1924 was a moment of critical significance in a time of great political and social challenges. It was a period of division within the Congress, as well as rising communal tensions across the country. Gandhi's leadership at this session symbolized his vision of reconciliation—both within the Congress and between different communities—and reinforced his commitment to non-violence

Mahatma Gandhiji addresses a massive gathering at the Belgaum Congress rally in December 1924.

Mahatma Gandhiji at Belgaum Congress session
December 1924

and self-sufficiency, principles that continue to resonate in contemporary India.

The centenary celebrations, which will unfold over the next year, will include a series of programs and events aimed at fostering a deeper understanding of the significance of this session and its lasting influence. These celebrations will not only honor the contributions and sacrifices of the leaders involved in the freedom movement but also inspire renewed engagement with the ideals of Gandhi that continue to shape the nation.

As we embark on this year-long commemoration, we invite all to reflect on the legacy of the 1924 Belgaum session, acknowledging its profound role in India's independence movement and reaffirming our collective commitment to the values of unity, peace, and non-violence that it so strongly upheld.

Through this commemorative volume, we aim to bring forward Gandhi's timeless values and the contributions of the leaders who participated in the freedom movement. It is an effort to reconnect today's generation with the ideals that continue to inspire the nation.

This book not only serves as a reminder of the pivotal role that the 1924 Belgaum session played in India's independence movement but also invites us to engage deeply with the messages and resolutions that continue to resonate in the present day.

Department of
Information & Public Relations

KARNATAKA DELIVERS

Gandhiji's Dreams

Novel Scheme for
Women Empowerment.

Shakthi

FREE BUS Service for
women
across Karnataka

Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Sri D. K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister

Number of beneficiaries: 359 crore
Total Expenditure of Rs. 8,688 crore *up to 22nd December 2024.

DELIVERED AS PROMISED...

Gruha Jyothi
Up to 200 Units of
Free Electricity
to each home

Gruha Lakshmi
₹2000
per month to female
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Anna Bhagya
10kg Free Food Grains
(per person / per month)

Yuva Nidhi
₹3000 Per month for Graduates
₹1500 Per month for Diploma Holders

As enshrined in our Constitution - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

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Gangadharrao Deshpande on horseback overseeing the arrangements
Pundalik Katagade is standing

PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS

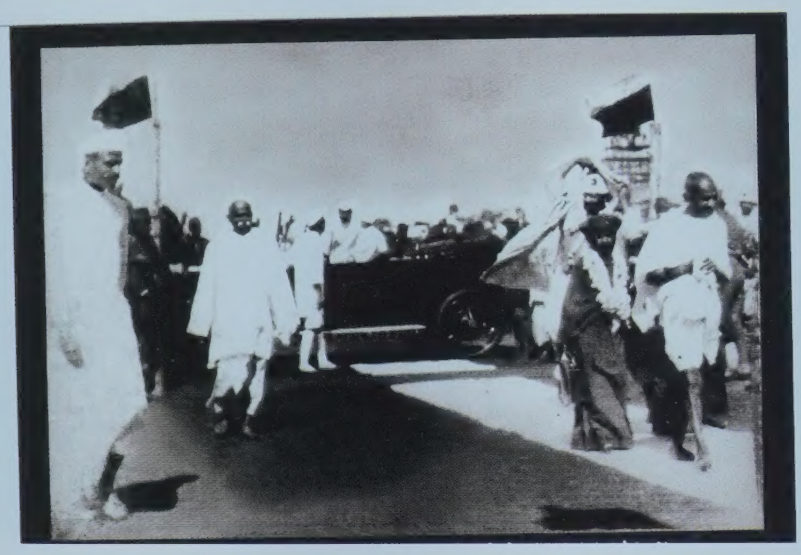
MR. GANGADHAR RAO, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I shall not abuse the great honor you have accorded me by giving you a long lecture. What I want to say from this rostrum is known to all of you. My speech, address, or lecture, whatever you call it, has been translated and printed in Hindi, Canaries, Marathi, and English. I had requested Mr. Gangadhar Rao to see that you all had copies of it by yesterday evening. I hope it has reached all of you and you have read it thoroughly.

I wish merely to say this: we are today faced with a situation where what we had set out to accomplish in 1920-21 we were not able to accomplish, while among us disunity and ill feeling have raised their head. Hindus and Muslims consider each other enemies and indulge in physical violence. It is hardly necessary to say that this is not the way to secure Swaraj. We, Hindus, look down on the untouchables and consider it sinful to touch them. We thus think that they are impure. But in this, we commit a sin before God, a sin of the greatest magnitude. It is true that for three or four years now we have accepted that everyone, big and small, should ply the charkha; and we have been saying in the Congress, in the All-India Congress Committee, that it is our intention to secure swaraj through the charkha. When I went to Poona in the course of the present campaign I said at a meeting that the Lokamanya had given us the first line of a sloka, "Swaraj is our birthright", and that it is my mission in life to complete the sloka. This is my belief. I repeat the statement here. If we desire swaraj, then the way to it is through the charkha, yarn, and khaddar. I regret to say that while you know it you do not act on it. I neither know nor can think of anything else. I therefore tell you, brothers and sisters, that it is futile for me to appear before you and make speeches, it does not lead anywhere, it is wasting your time and my own time which I consider valuable for I deem myself a servant of God.

I know that we cannot get Swaraj in this way. Begum Amjadi Bano said to me once that whenever she goes to attend a Congress session, for about a week she has the feeling that we have already got swaraj. It means that we put on an act of swaraj. It is like seeing someone play the part of Harishchandra who is of course not Harishchandra. We do not know whether

Subhash Chandra Bose arriving for the session (Belgaum - 1924)



Gandhiji going to the session with Mrs. Liyakat Ali (Belgaum-1924)

the player who acts like Harishchandra is truthful or not. This celebration of swaraj has similarly become a play-acting. That is why I say to you, brothers, Deshbandhu Das is moving a resolution; accept the resolution only if you agree with it. If you do not agree with it you should reject it. There is no reference to Hindu-Muslim unity, nor is it concerned with untouchability. All that it says is that we wish to ply the charkha. I ask you all who have come here as delegates-untouchables, Christians, or others you really represent those that you claim to represent and if you uphold the pledge of Mahomed Ali and Das, to do whatever you want to do with God in your sight. If you feel that it is not right, that Gandhi is deceiving you, then by all means reject it, and have nothing to do with it. But if you take a pledge, if you accept this resolution I consider accepting is taking a pledge-and then do not keep to it, I leave you to ourselves. If the country thinks Gandhi is mad, discard him. Think again. Do you feel India is fit for Swaraj? What does the world have to say about one who violates a pledge? Well, he may read the Bible, or the Granth Saheb, or the Koran, but in your eyes, he will be a leper, a good-for-nothing, a false coin, a counterfeit rupee. If you take a false coin to a shop the Government will haul you up for it. This is what I wish to tell you. I do not mean to mislead you; I do not mean to play a game with you. I tell you what I think and feel. I am convinced that swaraj cannot come so long as the tens of millions of our brothers and sisters do not take to the charkha, do not spin, do not make khadi, and wear it. So long as this does not come about, the utter poverty of India cannot be eradicated. There will be no swaraj so long as the tens of millions of the country's destitute have not got their bread.

You can have swaraj only on this condition. I have made a compact with Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru, and I have placed it before the whole country. I believe there is nothing wrong with what I want; I accept their right to what they want. I hold that we can gain nothing through the Councils. But there are big leaders who believe that something or other can be gained through the Councils and that if we do nothing else we can at least go into the Councils. It is true enough. I Must say that if they see some advantage in going into the Councils they should do so. They too are leaders of the country. Who am I to say no to them? It is in the compact that those who so wish may go into the Councils. It does not mean that non-co-operators should also follow them. The Congress belongs equally to Pro-changers and No-changers. It is a false notion that it belongs exclusively to either. Therefore they will go [into the Councils] on behalf of the Congress.

I said it was a false notion. But it is dangerous to argue that the notion that I am right and others are wrong should also be done away with. So long as there are different minds in the world there will also be different opinions. But we wish to embrace all and promote tolerance- it is part of ahimsa.

But, as I said, it is a small matter. The most important thing in the pledge is the charkha. If you do not believe in the science of charkha, if you do not have faith in khadi, and if you believe

Mahatma Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru &
Abul Kalam Azad, Wardha August 1935

Mahatma Gandhiji with Gangadhar Rao Deshpande
(Gandhiji leaving Belgaum)

further that the new franchise will weaken the Congress, you should give up the charkha.

Brothers,

I have addressed to you these few words in my lame and broken Hindi. I am sorry to see that a number of our brethren from Karnataka and the South come and say: "Speak in English." It is a matter of pain. Ever since I came to India I have been saying that at least in the Congress, when we speak about Swaraj, we should do so in Hindi. But to our misfortune our education has become so faulty and so much lethargy has crept in that we do not make as much effort towards this as is demanded.

If even now I could be convinced that those of our brethren who have come from Tamilnadu or Karnataka can understand my broken Hindi, I would go from here satisfied. But I know that is not the case. Yes, I am forgetting something. I am forgetting Deshbandhu Das. Bengal is also contributing to this sin. I wish God had given me the power to learn the language in which Rabindranath Tagore has created such fine literature and I could address my Bengali brethren in that language. But that was not to be.

Now I have only one request to make. Please understand it. All I had to say in Hindi I have said; you have understood the purpose of the resolution. He will come and say what he wants to. He will not read the text of the resolution. Please do not press him to. For the convenience of the delegates, I asked Jawaharlal and Gangadhar Rao to see that they all had copies of the resolution. So you will all have received it. (Voices of "No, no.") How many such are there? (A great many voices are raised.) Well, I have explained it to you. I have told you what it contains (Laughter.). You will all read it. It will be there in the newspapers. It is merely this. It expresses the desire of Swarajists Pro-changers—and No-changers to live in unity. Our views are different but our hearts beat together. If you are a No-changer you must have the same place in your heart for Deshbandhu Das, Pandit Motilal, Kelkar, and others as you have for me. If you are a Swarajist you must have the same respect for me as you have for any of them. This is what Hindu-Muslim unity is. The meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity

is that if I am a Sanatani I will have as much place in my heart for Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali or any other Muslim as I have for Malaviyaji, even if the former treats us as enemies. Strange, you will think—Malaviyaji on one side and the Mussalman who treats us as enemies on the other. But if I have learned anything from my reading of the Gita, the Bhagavata, and the Ramayana, it is this. So you will now read the resolution and hear what he has to say. Do not compel him to read out the resolution.

Continuing his remarks in English, the President said:

FRIENDS,

I do not propose to keep you longer than ten minutes. I had given myself no more than half an hour and I have taken more time than I had intended to in Hindustani. As you have all received copies of my address in the several necessary languages for our purpose, I do not propose to read any part of that address. It will tax your patience, it will waste your time and my time, and so I am avoiding reading that address. We want to go through the work that lies before us as quickly as possible. Desh Bandhu Das will presently place before you the central resolution. If you reject that resolution you should go your way and do what you think is best for you and for the country and permit me to do that work which I consider best for me, namely, to spin. I urge you, every one of you, to ponder over what is going to be placed before you.

A revolutionary change is being proposed before the nation, a change, I think, as Lalaji has said, as revolutionary as the change embarked upon by the nation under his Presidency in 1920 at the Special Session at Calcutta. I even admit to him that the change that I have proposed and placed before the nation is possibly more revolutionary. And, therefore, I make bold to say that it is calculated to bring you within measurable distance of swaraj if you will whole-heartedly accept that resolution and give effect to it; for the days when we could be satisfied with merely passing resolutions and then forgetting all about them are gone. This resolution is not addressed to the nation in a vague manner but to everybody who has a will to work. This resolution is specifically addressed to every man and every woman of understanding who graces this audience with his or her presence this afternoon. And, though Deshbandhu Das and Maulana Mahomed Ali will not ask you to pass this resolution, keeping God as a witness, I ask you to do that. And when you begin to vote upon that resolution, please remember and understand, that you will be passing that resolution with God as witness. It would mean that you are undertaking to do something for the nation, for the poorest of the country, for the attainment of swaraj; and if you have no conviction about it in you, then I would urge you to reject that resolution.

It should not matter to you that my personality is behind that resolution. I have said repeatedly that I am not an infallible being. I have admitted repeatedly that I am a fallible being. I have repeatedly admitted that I have sometimes in my life committed Himalayan blunders. I have made penance for them. An infallible being is a perfect person. He does not need to perform penance. He does not need to repent, because he is incapable of folly. He need not argue. I am just as good or as bad a mortal as any of you. And therefore, I want you to dismiss my personality from the equation and find the true answer to the equation.

The resolution is a momentous one. I know there is a large body of opinion against it. There is one body of opinion that says, "It is not proper to pin our faith entirely on spinning."

Another body says that spinning is good but it is a long-drawnout agony. And a third says, "Although khaddar and hand spinning are good in themselves, they can have no place in the national franchise." I hold views contrary to them. And my conviction is growing upon me day by day, so much so that

Jawaharlal Nehru, Devdas Gandhi (Center) and Ramdas Gandhi (L) with the urn of Mahatma Gandhiji's ashes, 1948

if I had all time to myself I would be spinning away every hour and feel that every revolution of the charkha was bringing swaraj nearer and nearer to us. Multiply that revolution by 300 million and you imagine the momentum that is set free for the attainment of swaraj. But that momentum you will set free only if you have the conviction that fires me in its efficacy for the attainment of swaraj.

There are many things that I have said in my address. Srimati Sarojini Devi has asked me to touch upon one thing, and out of regard for her who has rendered such splendid service in South Africa, I do so now. That is Hindu-Muslim unity. Maulana Shaukat Ali says, "I am tired of the whole business. Let us simply leave alone Hindu-Muslim riots wherever they happen." There is a good deal of wisdom in that big head; it is not all fat, I tell you (Laughter.).

Repeatedly he has said, "These Mussalmans of mine have become idiots. They have become demented. Similarly, your Hindus also have become idiotic. We are trying to decide their disputes and in trying to do so we are allowing swaraj to slip through our hands. So let us leave them alone." But how can I do so? Hindu-Muslim unity, like the charkha, is a madness with me; it is a passion with me. I cannot possibly leave it and forget all about it. So also, you see, I dote on that little girl, Gulnar. "Why does this man dote upon her?" you may ask. "With a reason," said I. This girl when she grows will think of one Gandhi who though a sanatani Hindu that would not share meat with her, would not touch beef himself, used to let others eat it if they liked, although he worshipped the cow. I might die by the time that girl reaches the year of maturity. When she grows up she will transmit my message. She is today pure and innocent. She thinks everything is right. She knows nothing of hatred. She is all love. I find in her love personified. Therefore, I have been treating her as my very flesh and blood in spite of the sea that divides her from me.

I am trying to unite myself with the Mussalmans by this means. She thinks that her Koran makes it lawful for her to kill the cow, while my religion enjoins upon me not to kill the cow. Who am I under the circumstances to prevent her from killing the cow? I would be denying my religion if I did so. But I wish to conquer her by preaching love. I will tell her, "The Koran does not pledge you to kill the cow or eat beef; my religion not only does not permit it, but my Koran compels me to worship the cow. You may eliminate the worship of the cow but you may tolerate my abstention from beef, you may tolerate my worship of the cow. Out of friendly regard for me, you can abstain from killing the cow." That is the secret of my love for the little girl, Gulnar. That is why I allow myself to be carried in the pocket of Maulana Shaukat Ali. Why do I not think of Malaviyaji? Simply because my worship of Malaviyaji is spontaneous. But I am partial to Mussalmans. How can I do otherwise? When you are partial to the Mussalmans you will reach the proper conclusion, the proper answer to this equation. If anybody were to say, "Solve this equation, what the Hindus and the Mussalmans should do?"

I would say, that every Hindu must be partial to the Mussalmans, and of every Mussalman to be partial to the Hindus. I find that there is a seer who wants to see God or to meet God in one way and I in another way and, therefore, in everything that he does I look askance. Then I say to myself, I must be partial, and when I have done that I shall be just. I like to ask the Mussalmans to do to be partial to the Hindus.

One thing more she (Mrs. Naidu) asks me to say. It is about the Liberals. "Are you going to say anything about the Liberals?" I can simply say, that I worship the Liberals. I want the Liberals to come in the Congress just as much as I want the Swarajists to do so. My heart is laid bare to them. We want to sit and spin at the charkha. "No," they say, "we don't like to sit at the charkha and won't spin." I say, "What shall I do?" If they say, "We won't go to charkha," I simply say to them, "Enter the Congress and drive me out of it."

I have finished. With God as a witness, I want you to say that whatever you decide to do you will fulfill it even though you may have to die.

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GANDHI BHARATH

Department of
Information & Public Relations

KARNATAKA DELIVERS

Gandhiji's Dreams

Hunger Free
Karnataka.

Anna
Bhagya

10kg Free Food Grains
(per person / per month)
Rs. 170 per head in lieu of 5kg food grains

Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Sri D. K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister

Total Expenditure of Rs. 9,104 crore
to 55.47 crore beneficiaries

*up to August 2024.

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Shakthi
FREE BUS Service for women across Karnataka

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Up to 200 Units of Free Electricity to each home

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As enshrined in our Constitution ... to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India

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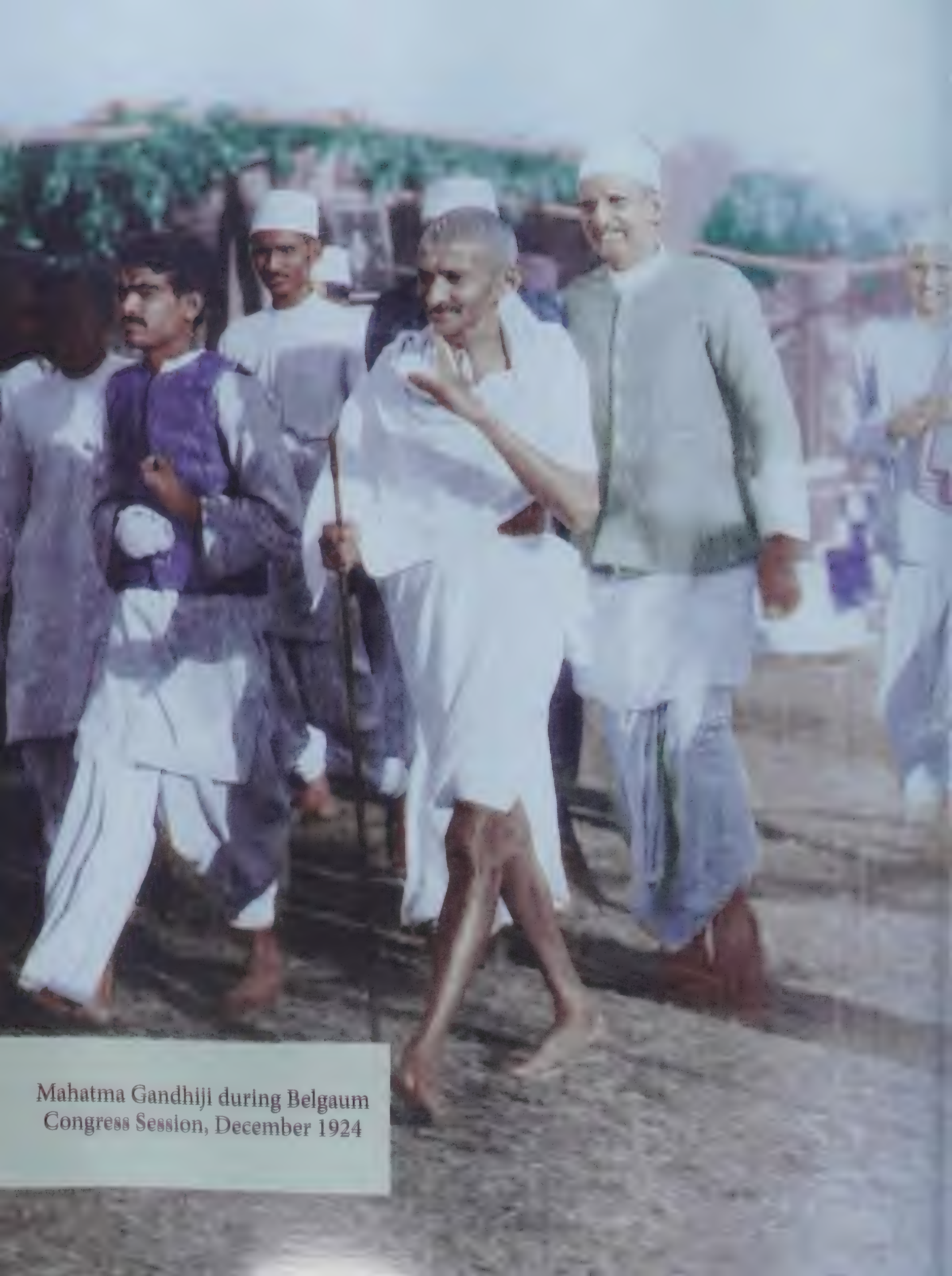


Mahatma Gandhiji during Belgaum
Congress Session, December 1924

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

(WRITTEN SPEECH)

FRIENDS,

It was after many misgivings that I accepted the burden of the honor you have done me today. The unique honor for this year should have been bestowed upon Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, who did such wonderful work both in Kenya and South Africa. But it was not to be. The developments both internal and external have necessitated by acceptance of the burden. I know that I shall have your support in my attempt to do justice to the high office to which you have called me. At the outset, let me note with respectful feelings the deaths during the year Amman, Sir Asutosh Mukerji, Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu, Dr. Subramaniam Iyer, and Mr. Lal Bahadur Giri at home, and of Messrs. Rustomjee and P. K. Naidu in South Africa. I tender in your name my respectful condolences to the bereaved families.

Mahatma Gandhi addressing the volunteers at the Belgaum Congress session.
December 1924

RETROSPECTIVE

Since September of 1920, the Congress has been principally an institution for developing strength from within. It has ceased to function using resolutions addressed to the Government for redress of grievances. It did so because it ceased to believe in the beneficial character of the existing system of government. The breach of faith with the Musalmans of India was the first rude shock to the people's faith in the Government. The Rowlatt Act and O'Dwyerism culminating in the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, opened the eyes of the people to the true nature of the system. At the same time, it was realized that the existence of the system depended upon the co-operation whether conscious or unconscious, and whether voluntary or, forced, of the people. With the view therefore of mending or ending the system it was decided to try to begin withdrawing voluntary cooperation from the top. At the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta in 1920 the boycott of Government titles, law courts, educational institutions, legislative bodies, and foreign cloth was resolved. All the boycotts were more or less taken up by the parties concerned. Those who could not or would not, retire from Congress. I do not propose to trace the chequered career of the non-Co-operation movement. Though not a single boycott was anywhere near completion, every one of them had undoubtedly the effect of diminishing the prestige of the particular institution boycotted.

The most important boycott was the boycott of violence. Whilst it appeared at one time to be entirely successful, it was soon discovered that the non-violence was only skin-deep. It was the passive non-violence of helplessness, not the enlightened non-violence or resourcefulness. The result was an eruption of intolerance against those who did not cooperate. This was violence of a subtler type. In spite, however, of this grave defect, I make bold to say that the propaganda of non-violence checked the outbreak of physical violence which would certainly have broken out, had not non-violence and non-cooperation come into being. It is my deliberate conviction that non-violence and non-co-operation have given the people a consciousness of their strength. It has brought to the surface the hidden powers in the people of resistance through suffering. It has caused an awakening among the masses which perhaps no other method could have. Though, therefore, non-violence non-co-operation has not brought us, Swaraj, though it has brought about certain deplorable results, and though the institutions that were sought to be boycotted are still flourishing, in my humble opinion, non-violence non-co-operation as a means of attaining political freedom has come to stay and that even its partial success has brought

Mahatma Gandhi speaking at the opening session of the Belgaum Conference December 1924

us nearer to Swaraj. There is no mistaking the fact that the capacity for suffering for the sake of a cause must advance it.

A HALT

But we are face to face with a situation that compels us to cry halt. For whilst individuals hold firmly to their belief in non-co-operation the majority of those who are immediately concerned have practically lost faith in it. Except for a boycott of foreign cloth. Scores of lawyers have resumed practice. Some even regret having ever given it up. Many who had given up Councils have returned to them and the number of those who believe in Council entry is on the increase. Hundreds of boys and girls who gave up Government schools and colleges have repented of their actions and have returned to them. I hear that Government schools and colleges can hardly cope with the demand for admission. In these circumstances, these boycotts cannot be worked as part of the National program, unless Congress is prepared to do without the classes directly affected.

But I hold it to be just as impracticable to keep these classes out of Congress as it would be now to keep the non-co-operators out. They must both remain in Congress, without

either party interfering with or hostilely criticizing the other. What applies to Hindu-Muslim unity is, I feel, applicable to the unity among different political groups. We must tolerate each other and trust time to convert one or the other to the opposite belief. We must go further. We must plead with the Liberals and others who have succeeded to rejoin the Congress. If non-co-operation is suspended, there is no reason why they should keep out. The advance must be from us Congressmen. We must cordially invite them and make it easy for them to come in. You are perhaps now able to see why I agreed with the Swarajists.

FOREIGN CLOTH BOYCOTT

You will observe that one boycott has been retained. Out of regard for the sentiment of an English friend the word 'Boycott' has been changed in the agreement into ' refusal to use foreign cloth.' There is no doubt a bad odor about the word 'Boycott'. It usually implies hatred. So far as I am concerned. I have not intended the word to bear any such meaning. The boycott has reference not to British but to foreign clothes.

That boycott is not merely a right but a duty. It is as much a duty as a boycott of foreign waters would be if they were imported to substitute the waters of the Indian rivers. This, however, is a digression. What I wanted to say was that the agreement saves and emphasizes the boycott of foreign clothing. For me, it is an effective substitute for violent methods. Just as certain acts such as personal abuse, irritating conduct, lying, causing hurt, and murder are symbols of violence, similarly courtesy, inoffensive conduct, truthfulness, etc. are symbols of non-violence. And so to me is boycott of foreign cloth a symbol of non-violence. Revolutionary crime is intended to exert pressure. But it is the insane pressure of anger and ill-will. I contend that non-violent acts exert pressure far more effectively than violent acts for that pressure comes from good-will and gentleness. Boycott of foreign clothes exerts such pressure. We import the largest amount of foreign cloth from Lancashire. It is also by far the largest of all our imports, sugar being next. Britain's chief interest center found the Lancashire trade with India. It is the one thing more than any other that has ruined the Indian peasant and imposed partial idleness upon him by depriving him of the one supplementary occupation he had. Boycott of foreign cloth is therefore a necessity if he is to live. The plan therefore is not merely to induce the peasant to refuse to buy the cheap and nice-looking foreign fabric but also to teach him to utilize his spare hours in carding and spinning cotton and getting it woven by the village weavers to dress himself in khaddar so woven and thus to save him the cost of buying foreign and for that matter even Indian mill-made cloth.

Thus boycott of foreign cloth using hand-spinning and hand-weaving, i.e. khaddar not only saves the peasant's money but it enables us workers, to render social service of a first-class order. It brings us into direct touch with the villagers. It enables us to give them real political

education and teach them to become self-sustained and self-reliant. The organization of khaddar is thus infinitely better than cooperative societies or any other form of village organization. It is fraught with the highest political consequence because it removes the greatest immoral temptation from Britain's way. I call the Lancashire trade immoral because it was raised and is sustained on the ruin of millions of India's peasants. As one immorality leads to another, the many proven immoral acts of Britain are traceable to this one immoral traffic. If therefore this one great temptation is removed from Britain's path by India's voluntary effort, it would be good for India, good for Britain, and, as Britain is today the dominant world power, good even for humanity.

I do not endorse the proposition that supply follows demand. On the contrary, demand is often artificially created by unscrupulous vendors. And if a nation is bound, as I hold it is, like individuals to comply with a code of moral conduct, then it must consider the welfare of those whose wants it seeks to supply. It is wrong and immoral for a nation to supply for instance intoxicating liquor to those who are addicted to drink. What is true of intoxicants is true of grain or cloth, if the discontinuance of their cultivation or manufacture in the country to which foreign grain or cloth are exported results in enforced idleness or penury. These latter hurt a man's soul and body just as much as intoxication. Depression is but excitement upside down and hence equally disastrous in its result and often more

Muhammad Ali handing over the congress presidentship to Gandhiji at Belgaum, December 1924

so because we have not yet learned to regard as immoral or sinful the depression of idleness or penury.

BRITAIN'S DUTY

It is then I hold the duty of Great Britain to regulate her exports with due regard to the welfare of India, as it is India that regulates her imports with due regard to her own welfare. That economics is untrue and ignores or disregards moral values. The extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics means nothing less than the introduction of moral values as a factor to be considered in regulating international commerce. And I must confess that my ambition is nothing less than to see international relations placed on a moral basis through India's efforts. I do not despair of the cultivation of limited mass non-violence. I refuse to believe that the tendency of human nature is always downward. The fruition of the boycott of foreign cloth through hand-spinning and khaddar is calculated not only to bring about a political result of the first magnitude but it is calculated also to make the poorest of India, whether men or women, conscious of their strength and make them partakers in the struggle for India's freedom.

FOREIGN versus BRITISH

It is hardly necessary now to demonstrate the futility, not to say the violent nature, of a boycott of British cloth or better still British goods as so many patriots have suggested. I am considering the boycott purely from the point of view of India's goods. All British goods do not harm us. Some goods such as English books we need for our intellectual or spiritual benefit. As regards cloth, it is not merely British cloth that harms us, but all foreign cloth and for that matter to a lesser extent even mill-made cloth injures us. Boycotts brought about anyhow of British cloth cannot yield the same result as such boycott brought about by hand-spinning and khaddar. This necessitates the exclusion at least of all foreign cloth. The exclusion is not intended as a punishment, it, is a necessity of national existence.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

But, say the critics, the spinning wheel has not taken, it is not exciting enough, it is an occupation only for women, it means a return to the Middle Ages, it is a vain effort against the majestic march of scientific knowledge for which

machinery stands. In my humble opinion, India's need is not excitement but solid work. For the millions solid work itself is exciting and tonic at the same time. The fact is that we have not given the spinning wheel enough trial. I am sorry to have to say that many of us have not given it a serious thought. Even the members of the All-India Congress Committee have failed to carry out the series of resolutions on hand-spinning which they have passed from time to time. The majority of us have simply not believed in it.

In the circumstances, it is hardly just to say that spinning has failed for want of excitement about it. To say that it is merely an old woman's occupation is to ignore facts.

Mahatma Gandhiji with grandson Kanubhai
at Juhu beach in Bombay in 1937

Spinning mills are a multiplication of spinning wheels. They are managed by men. It is time that we got out of this superstition that some occupations are beneath the dignity of men. Under normal conditions, no doubt spinning will be the occupation of the gentle sex. But the State of the Future will always have to keep some men at the spinning wheel so as to make improvements in it within limitations which as a cottage industry it must have. I must inform you that the progress the mechanism of the wheel has made would have been impossible if some of us men had not worked at it and had not thought about it day and night.

MACHINERY

I wish too, that you would dismiss from your minds the views attributed to me about machinery. In the first instance, I am no more trying to present for national acceptance all my views on machinery, than I am presenting the whole of my belief in non-violence. The spinning wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery. My head daily bows in reverence to its unknown inventor. What I do resent is the wanton and wicked destruction of the one cottage industry of India that kept the wolf from the doors of thousands of homes scattered over a surface 1900 miles long and 1500 miles broad.

SPINNING FRANCHISE

You will not now wonder at my passion for the spinning wheel, nor will you wonder why I have ventured to present it for introduction in the franchise, and why Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu Das have accepted it on behalf of the Swaraj Party. If I had my way, there would be no one on the Congress register who is unwilling to spin or who would not wear khaddar on all occasions. I am however thankful for what the Swaraj Party has accepted. The modification is a concession to weakness or want of faith. But it must serve as a spur to greater effort on the part of those who have full faith in the wheel and khaddar.

NO OTHER MESSAGE

I have thus dilated upon the spinning wheel because I have no better or other message, for the Nation. I know no other effective method for the attainment of Swaraj if it is to be by ' peaceful and legitimate means'. As I have already remarked it is the only substitute for violence that can be accepted by the whole nation. I swear by Civil Disobedience. But Civil Disobedience for the attainment of Swaraj is an impossibility unless and until we have attained the power of achieving a boycott of foreign cloth.

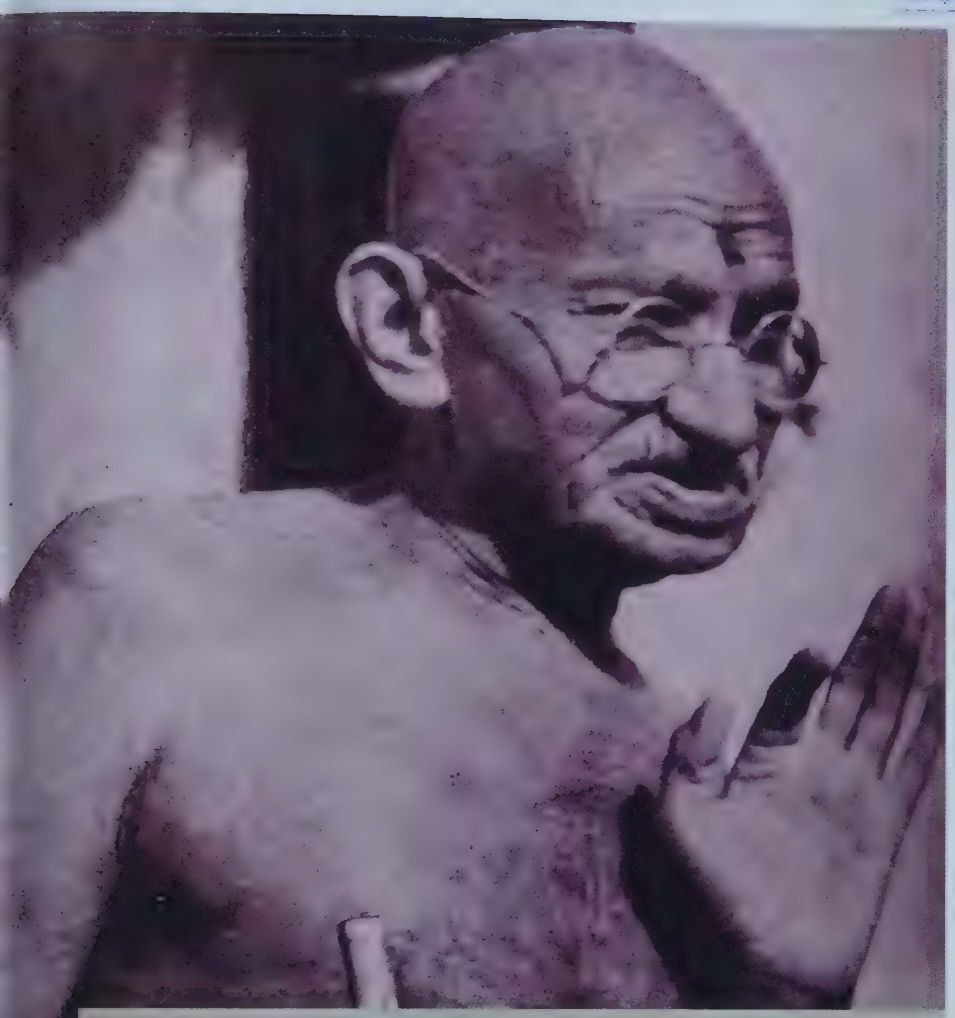
You will now easily perceive why I should be a useless guide for Congress if my views about the spinning wheel are not acceptable to you. Indeed you would be justified in regarding them, as some friends do, as a hindrance to national progress, if you consider me to be wrong in my exposition of the doctrine underlying the spinning wheel. If it does not appeal to your heads as well as your hearts, you will be wanting in your duty in not rejecting my lead. Let it no longer be said, as Lord Willingdon very properly once said of us, that we had not the strength and courage to say 'No'. Indeed your rejection of my proposal, if you do not believe in it, will be a step towards Swaraj.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Hindu-Muslim unity is not less important than the spinning wheel. It is the breath of our life. I do not need to occupy much of your time on this question, because the necessity of it for Swaraj is almost universally accepted. I say ' almost' because I know some Hindus and some Musalmans who prefer the present condition of dependence on Great Britain if they cannot have either wholly Hindu

or wholly Musalman in India. Happily, their number is small. I share Maulana Shaukat Ali's robust optimism that the present tension is a mere temporary distemper. The Khilafat agitation in which Hindus made common cause with their Musalman brethren and the non-co-operation that followed it. Caused an awakening among the hitherto slumbering masses. It has given a new consciousness to the classes as well as the masses. Interested persons who were disappointed during the palmy days of non-co-operation, now that it has lost the charm of novelty, have found their opportunity and are trading upon the religious bigotry or the selfishness of both the communities. The result is written in the history of the feuds of the past two years. Religion has been travested.

Trifles have been dignified by the name of religious tenets which, the fanatics claim, must be observed at any cost. Economic and political causes have been brought into play for the sake of fomenting trouble. The culminating point was reached in Kohat. The tragedy was aggravated by the



Mahatma Gandhiji and wife Kasturba at Sevagram Ashram, January 1942

callous indifference of the local authority. I must not try to examine the causes or to distribute the blame. I did have not the material for the task even if I was minded for it. Suffice it to say that the Hindu refugees fled for fear of their lives. There is in Kohat an overwhelming Musalman majority. They have in so far as is possible under a foreign domination effective political control. It is up to them, therefore, to show that the Hindus are as safe in the midst of their majority, as they would be if the whole population of Kohat was Hindu.

The Musalmans of Kohat may not rest satisfied till they have brought back to Kohat every one of the refugees. I hope that the Hindus will not fall into the trap laid for them by the Government and will resolutely decline to go back till the Musalmans of Kohat have given them full assurances as to their lives and property. The Hindus can live in the midst of an overwhelming Musalman majority only if the latter is willing to receive and treat them as friends and equals, just as Musalmans, if in a minority, must depend for an honorable existence in the midst of a Hindu majority on the latter's friendliness. A Government can give protection against thieves and robbers, but not even a Swaraj Government will be able to protect people against a wholesale boycott by one community or another. Governments can deal with abnormal situations. When quarrels become a normal thing of, life, it is called civil war and parties must fight it out themselves. The present Government being foreign, in reality a veiled military rule, has resources at its command for its protection against any combination we can make and has, therefore, the power, if it has the will, to deal with our class feuds.

But no Swaraj Government with any pretension of being a popular Government can possibly be organized and maintained on a war footing. A Swaraj Government is a Government established by the free joint will of Hindus, Musalmans, and others. Hindus and Musalmans, if they desire Swaraj, have perforce to settle their differences amicably. The Unity Conference at Delhi has paved the way for a settlement of religious differences. The Committee of the All Parties' Conference is among other things expected to find a workable and just solution of the political differences not only between Hindus and Musalmans but between all classes and all castes, sects, or denominations. Our goal must be the removal, at the earliest possible moment, of communal or sectional representation. A common electorate must impartially elect its representatives on the sole ground of merit. Our service must be likewise impartially manned by the most qualified men and women. But till that time comes and communal jealousies of preferences become a thing of the past, minorities who suspect the motives of majorities must be allowed their way. The majority must set the example of self-sacrifice.

UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability is another hindrance to Swaraj. Its removal is just as essential for Swaraj as the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity. This is an essentially Hindu question and Hindus cannot claim or take Swaraj till they have restored the liberty of the suppressed classes. They have sunk with the latter's suppression. Historians tell us that the Aryan invaders treated the original inhabitants of Hindustan

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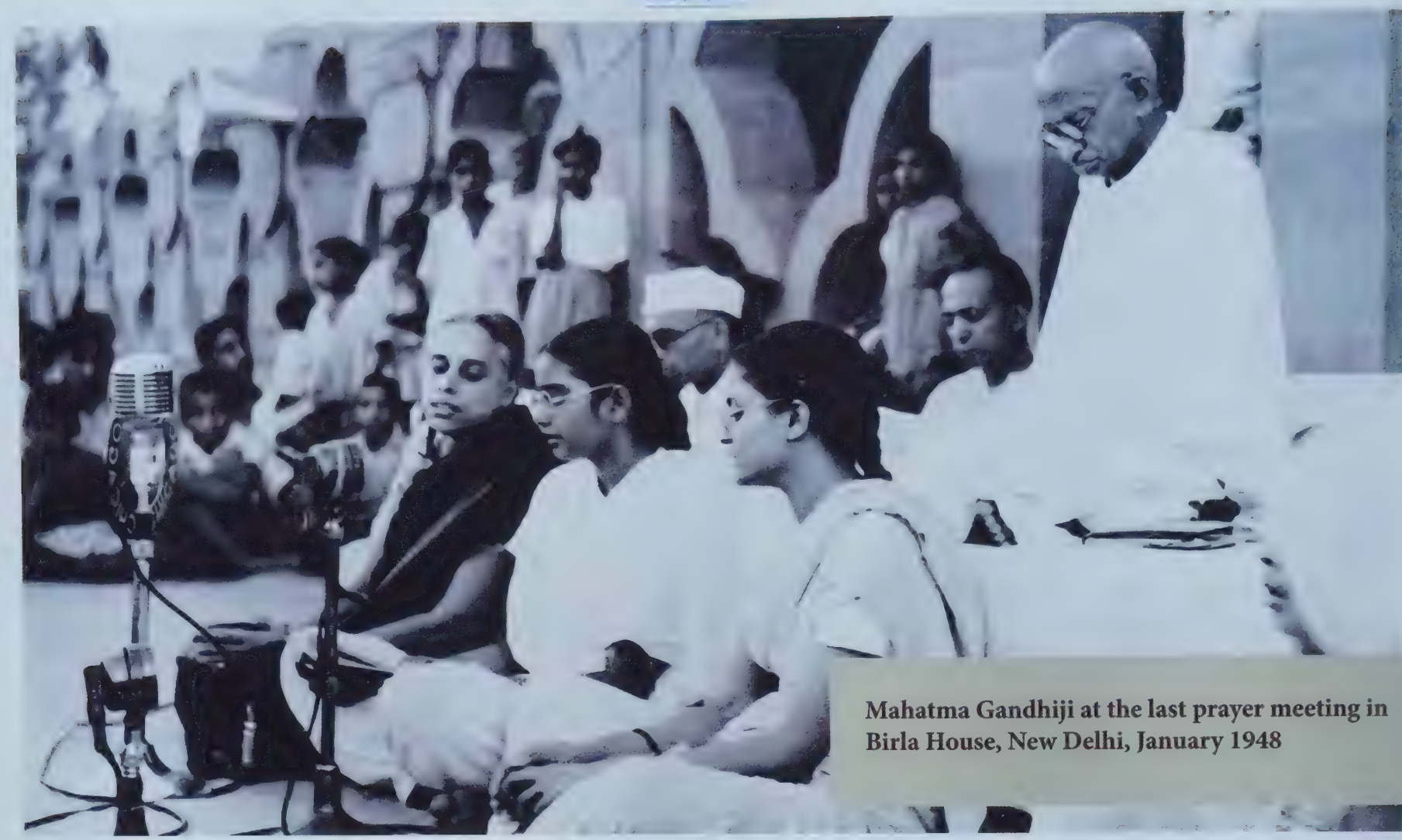
precisely as the English invaders treated us. If not much worse. If so, our helotry is just retribution for our having created an untouchable class. The sooner we remove the blot the better it is for us Hindu. But the priests tell us that untouchability is a divine appointment. I claim to know something about Hinduism. I am certain that the priests are wrong.

It is blasphemy to say that God set apart any portion of humanity as untouchable. And Hindus who are Congressmen have to see to it that they break down the barrier at the earliest possible moment. The Vaikom Satyagrahis are showing us the way. They are carrying on their battle with gentleness and firmness. They have patience, courage, and faith. Any movement in which these qualities are exhibited becomes irresistible. I would however warm the Hindu brethren against the tendency which one sees nowadays of exploiting the suppressed class for a political end. To remove untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves. The purification required is not of untouchables but of the so-called superior castes. There is no vice that is special to the untouchables, not even dirt and insanitation. It is our arrogance that blinds us ' superior' Hindus to our own blemishes and which magnifies those of our downtrodden brethren whom we have suppressed and whom we keep under suppression. Religions like nations are being weighed in the balance. God's grace and revelation are the monopoly of no race or nation.

They descend equally upon all who wait upon God. That religion and that nation will be bottled out of the face of the earth which pins its faith to injustice untruth or violence. God is Light, not Darkness. God is Love, not Hate. God is Truth, not Untruth. God alone is Great. We his creatures are but dust. Let us be humble and recognize the place of the lowliest of His creatures. Krishna honored Sudama in his rags as he honored no one else. Love is. the root of religion or sacrifice and this perishable body is the root of self or irreligion, says Tulsidas. Whether we win Swaraj or not, the Hindus have to purify themself before they can hope to receive the Vedic philosophy and make it a living reality.

SWARAJ SCHEME

Mahatma Gandhiji and his wife Kasturba with a child in Verulam, August 1913



Mahatma Gandhiji at the last prayer meeting in Birla House, New Delhi, January 1948

But the spinning wheel, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability are only means to an end. The end we do not know. For it is enough to know the means. Means and ends are convertible terms in my philosophy of life. But I have long professed my conversion to the view pressed upon the public by Babu Bhagavandas that the public must know the end, not vaguely but precisely. They must know the full definition of Swaraj, i.e. the scheme of Swaraj which all India wants and must fight for. Happily, the Committee appointed by the All Parties' Conference is charged with that mission, and let us hope that the Committee will be able to produce a scheme that will be acceptable to all parties. I may suggest for its consideration the following points?

1. The qualification for the franchise should be neither property nor position but manual work, for example as suggested for the Congress Franchise. Literary or property tests have proved to be elusive. Manual work gives an opportunity to all who wish, to take part in the government and well-being of the State.

2. The ruinous military expenditure should be curtailed to the proportion necessary for the protection of life and property in normal times.

3. Administration of justice should be cheapened and with that end in view, the final court of appeal should be not in London but in Delhi. Parties to civil suits must be compelled in the majority of cases to refer their disputes to arbitration, the decisions of these Panchayats to be final except in cases of corruption or obvious misapplication of law. Multiplicity of intermediate courts should be avoided. Case law should be abolished and the general procedure should be simplified. We have slavishly followed the cumbrous and worn-out English procedure. The tendency in the Colonies is to simplify the procedure so as to make it easy for litigants to plead their own cases.

4. Revenues from intoxicating liquors and drugs should be abolished.

5. Salaries of the Civil and Military Service should be brought down to a level compatible with the general condition of the country.

6. There should be a re-distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis with as complete autonomy as possible for the province for its internal administration and growth.

7. Appointment of a commission to examine all the monopolies given to foreigners and, subject to the findings of the commission, full guarantees to be given for all vested rights justly acquired.

8. Full guarantee of their status to the Indian Chiefs without any hindrance from the Central Government subject to the rights of asylum to subjects of these States who, not being offenders against the Penal Code, may seek it in Self-governing India.

9. Repeal of all arbitrary powers.

10. The highest post to be open to all who may be otherwise fit. Examinations for the Civil and Military Services to be in India.

11. Recognition of complete religious freedom to various denominations subject to mutual forbearance.

12. The official language for provincial governments, legislatures, and courts, within a definite period, to be the vernacular of the province of the Privy Council, the final court of appeal, to be Hindustani; the script to be either Devanagari or Persian. The language of the Central Government and of the Central Legislature is also Hindustani. The language of international diplomacy is English.

I trust you will not laugh at what may appear to you to be extravagance of thought in the foregoing sketch of some of the requirements of Swaraj as I would have it. We may not have the power today to take receive or do the things I have mentioned. Have we the will? Let us at least cultivate the desire. Before I leave this highly attractive, because speculative theme let me assure the Committee in charge of the drafting of a Swaraj scheme, that I claim for my suggestion no more attention than it would give to any single individual. I have incorporated them in my address only to gain greater currency for them than they would perhaps otherwise receive.

INDEPENDENCE

The above sketch presupposes the retention of the British connection on perfectly honorable and absolutely equal terms. But I know that there is a section among Congressmen who want under every conceivable circumstance complete independence of Britain. They will not have even an equal partnership. In my opinion, if the British Government means what it says and honestly helps us to equality, it would be a greater triumph than a complete severance of the British connection. I would therefore strive for Swaraj within the Empire but would not hesitate to severally connection if severance became a necessity through Britain's own fault. I would thus throw the burden of separation on the British people. The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent States warring one against another but a federation of friendly interdependent States, the consumption of that event may be far off.

I want to make no grand claim for our country But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal inter-dependence rather than independence, it should rest with Britain to say that she will have no real alliance with India. I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting independence. Any scheme that I would frame, while Britain declares her goal about India to be complete equality within the Empire, would be that of alliance and not of independence without alliance. I would urge every Congressman not to be insistent on independence in each and every case, not because there is anything impossible about it, but because it is wholly unnecessary till it has become perfectly manifest that Britain really means subjugation despite her declaration to the contrary.

THE SWARAJ PARTY

So far, then, I have considered the contents of the agreement and the general questions arising from it. Not much need be said about the status of equality given to the Swaraj Party. I wish I would have avoided it, not because the Party is not worthy, but because I do not share its views about Council entry. But if I must remain in Congress and even lead it, I must recognize facts as they are. It was easy enough for me to go out of Congress or to decline

the honor of presiding. But it was not, so I thought and still think, in the interest of the country for me to take that step. The Swaraj Party represents if not a majority, at least a strong and growing minority in the Congress. If I was not to divide the Congress on the issue of its status, I was bound to agree to its conditions so long as they were not in conflict with my conscience. They are not in my opinion, unreasonable. The Swarajists want to use the name of the Congress for their policy. A formula had to be found for their doing so without their pledging or binding the no-changers to their policy.

One of the ways of doing it was to give it the authority and the responsibility both financial and executive with regard to the framing and the prosecution of their policy. Congress as a whole could not guide that policy without sharing the responsibility. And as I could not take the responsibility, and as I apprehend No changes can, I could not be a party to shaping the policy, nor could I shape it without my heart in it. And the heart can only go where belief is. I know that the sole authority of the Swaraj Party to use the name of the Congress in regard to the Council program makes somewhat awkward the position of the other parties wishing to join the Congress. But I fear it is inevitable. The Swaraj Party cannot be expected to surrender the advantage it possesses.

After all, it wants the advantage not for itself but for the service of the country. And all parties have or can have that ambition or no other. I hope therefore that the others will join the Congress and work from within to affect the course of the country's politics. Dr. Besant has led the way in that direction. I know that she would have many things done otherwise, but she is content to come in hoping to bring round the electorate to her view by working within the Congress. The No-changers can, in my humble opinion, vote for the agreement with a clear conscience. The only national program jointly to be worked by all the parties is khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity, and, for the Hindus removal of untouchability. Is not this after all what they want?

PURELY SOCIAL REFORM

It has been suggested that this program turns Congress into

Congress leaders arriving at the Congress Session in Belgaum, December 1924

Gopal Krishna Gokhale's Visit to Durban, 1912.
Front row (L-R): Kallenbach, Gandhiji, Gokhale, Rustomjee.

a purely social reform organization. I beg to differ from that view. Everything that is absolutely essential for Swaraj is more than merely social work and must be taken up by Congress. It is not suggested that the Congress should confine its activity for all times to this work only.

But it is suggested that the Congress should for the coming year concentrate the whole of its energy on the work of construction, or as I have otherwise described it, the work of internal growth. Nor does the agreement exhaust the list of constructive items that Congress must handle. Those I am about to mention are of the highest importance, but they, being non-contentious and not absolutely essential for Swaraj as the foregoing three items, are to be mentioned in the agreement.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

One such is the maintenance of national education institutions. Probably the public does not know that next to Khaddar the running of national educational institutions has been the most successful. These cannot be given up so doing as even a few pupils are left. It must be a point of honor for the respective provinces to keep up their colleges and schools. Suspension of non-cooperation should not have any injurious effect on these institutions. On the contrary, greater effort than ever before should be made to maintain and strengthen them.

Most provinces have their national schools and Colleges. Gujarat alone has a national university maintained at an annual cost of Rs. 1,00,000 and has control of 3 Colleges and 70 Schools with 9,000 pupils. It has acquired its own ground at Ahmedabad and has already spent Rs. 2,05,323, in buildings. Throughout the country, the finest and most silent work has been done by non-co-operating students. Theirs is a great and noble sacrifice. From a worldly standpoint, they have perhaps lost the prospect of brilliant careers. I suggest to them however that from the national standpoint, they have gained more than they have lost. They left their schools or colleges because it was through them that the youth of the nation were insulted and humiliated in the Punjab.

Mahatma Gandhiji walking with journalists in Rome, December 1931

The first link in the chain of our bondage is forged in these institutions. The corresponding national institutions however inefficiently managed they may be, are the factories where the first instruments of our freedom are forged. After all, the hope of the future centers around the boys and girls studying in these national institutions. I therefore regard the upkeep, of these institutions as a first charge on provincial funds. But these institutions to be truly national must be clubs for promoting real Hindu-Muslim unity, there must be also nurseries for training Hindu boys and girls to regard untouchability as a blot upon Hinduism and a crime against humanity. There should be training schools for expert spinners and weavers. If the Congress retains its belief in the potency of the spinning wheel and khaddar, one has a right to expect these institutions to supply the science of the spinning wheel. There should be also factories for Khaddar production. This is not to say that the boys and the girls are not to have any literary training. But I do maintain that the training of the hand and the heart must go hand-in-hand with that of the head. The quality and the usefulness of a national school or college will be measured not by the brilliance of the literary attainments of its scholars but by the strength of the national character, and deftness in handling the carding bow, the spinning wheel, and the loom.

Whilst I am most anxious that no national school or college should be closed, I should have not the slightest hesitation in closing down a school or college, that is indifferent to the admission of non-Hindu boys or that shuts its door against the entry of untouchables or that has not carding and spinning as an indispensable part of the training. Time is past when we can be satisfied with the word ' national' on the sign-board of the school and the knowledge that it is not affiliated with any Government university or is not otherwise controlled by the Government.

I must also not omit to point out that the tendency in many national institutions still is to neglect the vernaculars and Hindustani. Many teachers have not realized the necessity of imparting instruction through the vernaculars or

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Founders of the Indian National Congress, 1885; Gandhiji is in the top row, fourth from the left.

Hindustani. I rejoice to observe that Sjt. Gangadhar Rao has arranged a meeting of national educationists to exchange experiences on the several points mentioned by me and to evolve, if possible a general plan of education and action.

UNEMPLOYED NON-CO-OPERATIONS

This is perhaps the proper place to mention those lawyers who have given up the practice, schoolmasters, and other government employees who have given up Government service at the call of the nation. I know that there are many such men who find it hard to make the two ends meet. They deserve national support. The Khadi Board and the national schools and colleges are the two services that can take in almost an ultimate number of honest and industrious men who are willing to learn and labor and are satisfied with a modest allowance. I observe a tendency not to accept any remuneration for national service. The desire to serve without remuneration is praiseworthy but all cannot satisfy it. Every labor is worthy of his hire. No country can produce thousands of unpaid full-time workers. We must therefore develop an atmosphere in which a patriot would consider it an honor to serve the country and accept an allowance for such service.

INTOXICANTS

Another item of national importance is the liquor and the opium traffic. Had the wave of enthusiasm that swept across the country in 1921 in the cause of temperance remained non-violent, we would today have witnessed a progressive improvement. But unfortunately, our picketing degenerated into violence, vailed when it was not open. Picketing had, therefore, to be abandoned and the liquor shops and opium dens began to flourish as before. But you will be pleased to hear that the temperance work has not died out altogether. Many workers are still continuing their quiet and selfless service in the cause of temperance.

We must, however, realize that we will not be able to eradicate the evil till we have Swaraj. It is no matter of pride to us that our children are being educated out of the revenue derived from this immoral source. I would almost forgive the Council entry by Congressmen if they would boldly sweep out this revenue even though education may have to be starved. Nothing of the kind should happen if they insist

on a corresponding reduction in military expenditure.

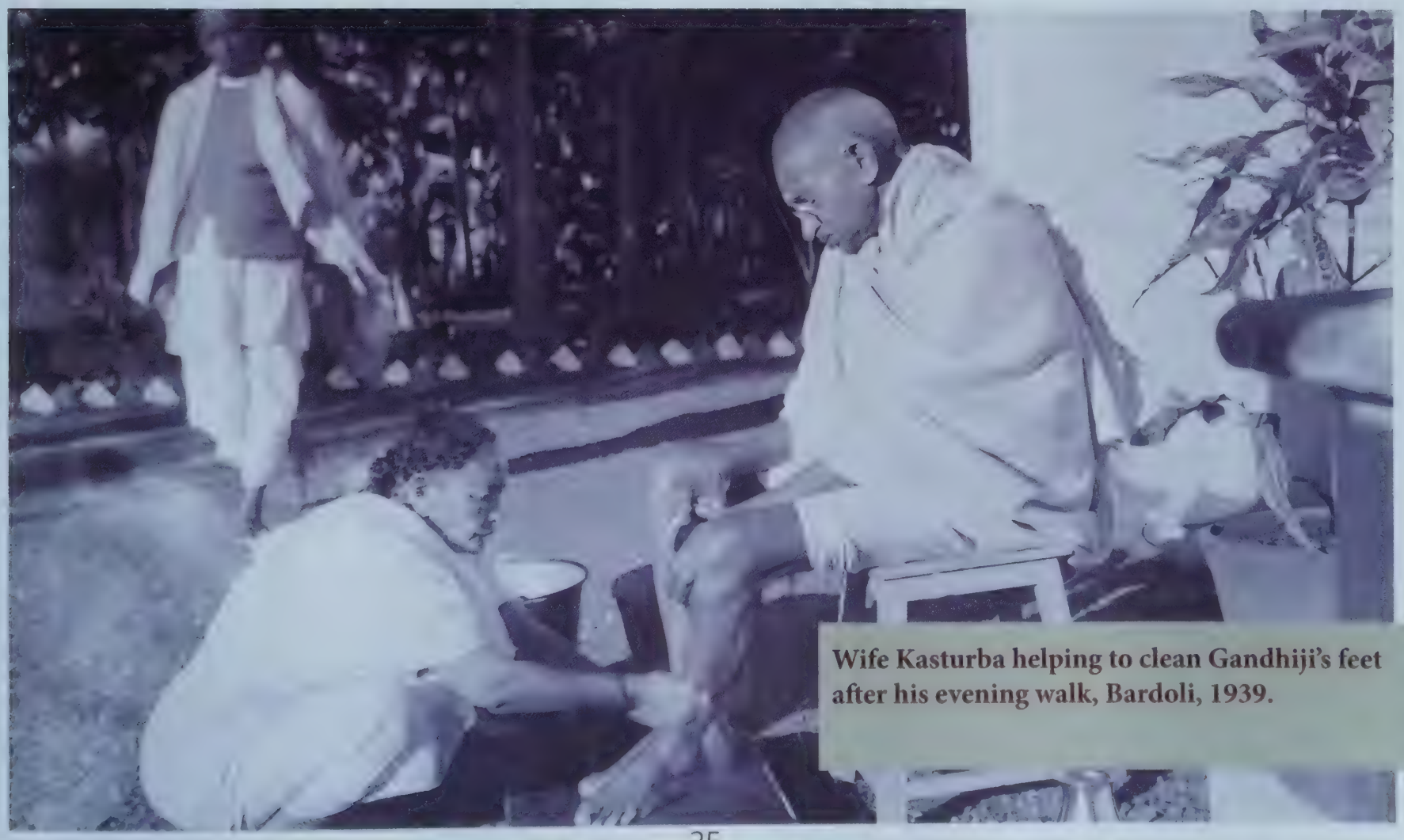
BENGAL REPRESSION

You will observe that in the foregoing paragraphs, I have confined myself to the internal developments. But the external circumstances, and among them chiefly the acts of our rulers, are affecting our destiny no less surely (though it may adversely) than the internal development. We may turn them to advantage if we will or we may succumb to them to our disadvantage. The latest act of the rulers is the repression commenced in Bengal. The All Parties' Conference condemned it in no uncertain terms. The Conference had hesitation in saying that the blow was aimed at the Bengal Swaraj Party. But I have none. I have been to Calcutta and had the opportunity of meeting men representing a variety of opinions and I came to the conclusion that the blow was aimed at the Swaraj Party.

The opinion is confirmed by the speeches delivered by Lords Lytton and Reading. The defense they have offered is wholly unconvincing. Such a defence is possible only in a place like India where public opinion counts for little or nothing. Lord Lytton's conditions of release are an insult to our intelligence. Their Excellencies beg that question when they tell us that the situation warranted the Ordinance and the action under the Regulation of 1918. The national contention is;

1. That the situation they describe has not been proven to exist;
2. That assuming that the situation does exist, the remedy is worse than the disease ;
3. That the ordinary law contains enough powers for dealing with the situation; and lastly ;
4. That even if extraordinary powers were necessary they should have been taken from the legislature which is of their own creation.

The speeches of their Excellencies evade these issues altogether. A nation that has had considerable experience with unsupported statements of the Government will not accept them as gospel truth. Their Excellencies know that we cannot and will not believe their statements not because they are wilfully untruthful, but because the sources of,



Wife Kasturba helping to clean Gandhiji's feet after his evening walk, Bardoli, 1939.

Mahatma Gandhiji at the 39th Congress session held in Belgaum in 1924.

their information have often been discovered to be tainted. Their assurances are therefore a mockery of the people. The speeches are almost a challenge to us to do our worst. But we must not be irritated or impatient. Repression, if it does not cow us down, it does not deter us from our purpose, can but hasten the advent of Swaraj; for it puts us on our mettle and evokes the spirit of self-sacrifice and courage in the face of danger. Repression does for a true man or a nation what fire does for gold. In 1921 we answered repression with Civil Disobedience and invited the Government to do its worst. But today we are obliged to eat the humble pie. We are not ready for Civil Disobedience. We can but prepare for it. Preparation for civil disobedience means discipline, self-restraint, a non-violent but resisting spirit, cohesion, and above all scrupulous and willing obedience to the known laws of God and such laws of man as are in furtherance of God's laws. Unfortunately, we have neither discipline nor self-restraint enough for our purpose, we are either violent or our non-violence is unresisting, we do have not enough cohesion, and the laws that we obey, whether of God or man, we obey compulsorily.

As between Hindus and Musalmans, we witness a daily denant breach of laws both of God and man. This is no atmosphere for Civil Disobedience—the one matchless and invincible weapon at the disposal of the oppressed. The alternative is undoubtedly violence. We seem to have the atmosphere for it. Hindu-Muslim fights are our training for it. And those who believe that India's deliverance lies through violence are entitled to gloat over the free fights that take place between us. But I say to those who believe in the cult of violence: "You are retarding India's progress. If you have any pity or friendly feelings for the starving millions., know that your violence will do them no service. Those whom you seek to depose are better armed and infinitely better organized than you are.

You may not care for your own lives, but you dare not disregard those of your countrymen who have no desire to die a martyr's death. You know that this Government believes in the Jallianwala Bagh massacres as a legitimate means of self-defense. Whatever may be true of other countries, there is no chance of the cult of violence flourishing in this country India is admittedly the best repository and exponent of non-violence. Will you not better devote your lives if you sacrifice them in the cause of non-violence ? ". I know, however, that my appeal to the violent revolutionaries will be just as fruitless as such appeal

to the violent and anarchical Government is likely to be. We must therefore find the remedy and demonstrate to both the violent Government and the violent revolutionaries that there is a force that is more effective than their violence.

REPRESSION A SYSTEM

I regard this repression as a chronic symptom of a chronic disease. The European dominance and Asiatic subjection is the formula. Sometimes it is stated still more cryptically as White vs. Black. Kipling miscalled the white man's yoke as the ' white man's burden'. In the Malaya peninsula, the color bar that was thought to be temporary has now almost become a permanent institution. The Mauritius planter must get Indian labor without let or Hindrance.

The Kenya Europeans successfully lord it over Indians who have a prior right to be there. The Union of South Africa would today drive out every Indian if it safely could, in total disregard of past obligations. In all these cases the Government of India and the Imperial Government are not helpless; they are unwilling or not so insistent as they ought to be on the protection of Indian settlers. The Government of India has not shown even the decency to publish the report of its own Commission on Fiji.

The attempt to crush the indomitable spirit of the Akalis is a symptom of the same disease. They have poured their blood like water for the sake of a cause they hold as dear as life itself. They may have erred. If they have, it is they who have bled in the process. They have hurt no one else. Nankana Saheb, Buruka-Bagh, and Jaito will bear witness to their courage and their mute sufferings and martyrdom. But the Governor of the Punjab is reported to have vowed that he will crush the Akalis.

One hears that repression is crushing the Burmese spirit.

Egypt fares no better than we do; A mad Egyptian kills a British officer; certainly a detestable crime. The punishment is not only a detestable crime, but it is an outrage upon humanity. Egypt has nearly lost all it has. A whole nation has been mercilessly punished for the crime of one man. It may be that the murderer had the sympathy of the Egyptians. Would that justify terrorism by a power well able to protect its interests without it?

The repression in Bengal is therefore not an extraordinary thing. We must treat its periodic eruption in some shape or other or some province or other, as our normal condition till we come to our own.

Need for Sanction

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru watches the cremation of Mahatma Gandhiji, January 1948.

The Congress, therefore, to be worthy of its trust must devise a sanction to back its demands. Before we can forge the sanction, we Hindus, Musalmans, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, etc. must unite and so should Swarajists, No-Changers. Liberals, Home-Rulers, Muslim Leaguers and others. If we can but speak with a united voice and know our own mind it would be well. If we can develop the powers to keep foreign cloth from our land, it would be better. We are ready then for the sanction.

My faith

Let me state my faith; as a Congressman wishing to keep the Congress intact, I advise suspension of non-co-operation for I see that the nation is not ready for it. But as an individual, I cannot—will not—do so as long as the Government remains what it is. It is not merely a policy with me, it is an article of faith. Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience are but different branches of the same tree called Satyagraha. It is my Kalpadrum—my Jam-I-Jam—the Universal Provider. Satyagraha is the search for Truth, and God is Truth. Ahimsa or Non-violence is the light that reveals that Truth to me. Swaraj for me is part of the Truth. This Satyagraha did not fail me in South Africa, Kheda, or Champaran and in a host of other cases I could mention. It excludes all violence or hate.

Therefore, I cannot and will not hate Englishmen. Nor will I bear their yoke. I must fight unto death the unholy attempt to impose British methods and British institutions on India. But I combat the attempt with non-violence. I believe in the capacity of India to offer non-violent battle to the English rulers. The experiment has not failed. It has succeeded, but not to the extent we had hoped and desired. I do not despair. On the contrary, I believe that India will come to her own in the near future and that only through Satyagraha. The proposed suspension is part of the experiment. Non-co-operation need never be resumed if the program sketched by me can be fulfilled.

Non-violent non-co-operation in some form or other, whether through Congress or without it, will be resumed if the program fails. I have repeatedly stated that Satyagraha never fails and that one perfect Satyagrahi is enough to vindicate the Truth. Let us all strive to be perfect Satyagrahis. The striving does not require any quality unattainable by the lowest among us. For satyagraha is an attribute of the spirit within. It is latent in every one of us. Like Swaraj, it is our birthright. Let us know it.

"Bathing arrangements at the Belgaum Congress Session, 1924."

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Information & Public Relations

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RESOLUTION I
CONDOLENCE

When the President moved the first resolution. He said:
I shall now read the first resolution. After I read the resolution, you will kindly stand. It is incredibly simple; our condolence to those who are no longer with us.

This Congress records with sorrow the deaths of Bi-Amma, Sir Ashutosh Chowdhari, Sir Ashutosh Mukherji, Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu, Dr. Subramania Ayyar, Mr. Dalbahadur Giri, Mr. Govind Venkatesh Yalgi, Mr. Vamana Rao Moharir, Mr. T. V. Gopalswami Mudaliar, Mr. C. V. P. Shivam and Lala Kanhya Lalji and also Messrs Rustomjee Jeevanji Ghorkhodu and P. K. Naidu in South Africa and tenders its respectful sympathy to the bereaved families.

Gopura at the Belgaum Session

RESOLUTION II
CALCUTTA AGREEMENT AND SPINNING FRANCHISE

(a) (i) The Congress hereby endorses the following agreement between Mahatma Gandhi on the one hand and Deshbandhu C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru acting on behalf of the Swaraj Party on the other.

(ii) The Congress hopes that the agreement will result in true unity between the two wings of the Congress and will also enable persons belonging to other political organizations to join the Congress. The Congress congratulates the Swarajists and others arrested under the New Ordinance or Regulation III of 1818 and is of the opinion that such arrests are inevitable so long as the people of India do have not the capacity for vindicating their status and liberty, and is further of opinion that such capacity can in the present circumstances of the country be developed by achieving the long-deferred exclusion of foreign cloth; and therefore as a token of the earnestness and determination of the people to achieve this national purpose, welcomes the introduction of hand-spinning as part of the franchise and appeals to every person to avail himself or herself of it and join the Congress.

(iii) In view of the foregoing, the Congress expects every Indian, man, and woman, to discard all foreign cloth and to use and wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of all other cloth. With a view to accomplish the said purpose without delay, Congress expects all Congress members to help the spread of hand-spinning and the antecedent processes and the manufacture and sale of khaddar.

(iv) The Congress appeals to the Princes and the wealthy classes of India and the members of political and other organizations not represented on the Congress, and municipalities, local boards, panchayats, and such other institutions, to extend their help to the spread

of hand- spinning by personal use and otherwise and especially by giving liberal patronage to the classes of artists, still surviving and capable of working artistic designs in fine khaddar.

(v) The Congress appeals to the merchants engaged in the foreign cloth and yarn trade to appreciate the interests of the nation and discontinue their importation of foreign cloth and yarn and help the national cottage industry by dealing in khaddar.

(vi) It has come to the notice of the Congress that varieties of cloth are manufactured in mills and on other looms out of mill yarn and sold in the Indian market as khaddar, the Congress appeals to the mill-owners and other manufacturers concerned, to discontinue this undesirable practice and further appeals to them to encourage the revival of the ancient cottage industry of India by restricting their operations among those parts of the country that have not yet come under the Congress influence and appeals to them to discontinue the importation of foreign yarn.

(vii) The Congress appeals to the heads and leaders of all religious denominations whether Hindu, Muslim, or any other to preach to their congregations the message of khaddar and advise them to discontinue the use of foreign cloth.

(b) The present Article VIP of the Constitution to be re-pealed and the following to be substituted therefor:

(i) Every person not disqualified under article IV^ shall be entitled to become a member of any primary organization controlled by the Provincial Congress Committee, provided that no one shall be a member of any Congress Committee or organization who does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar at political and Congress functions or while engaged in Congress business and does not make a contribution of 20,000 yards of evenly spun yarn per year of his or her own spinning, or in the case of illness or unwillingness or any such cause, the same quantity of yarn spun by any other person; provided also that no per- son shall be a member of two parallel Congress organizations at the same time.

(ii) The year of the membership shall be reckoned from the 1st of January to the 31st of December. The said subscription shall be payable in advance and may be paid in installments of 2,000 yards per month payable in advance. Members joining in the middle of the year shall contribute the full quantity due from the beginning of the year. During 1925, the subscription shall be 20,000 yards only and shall be payable on or before 1st March or in installments as aforesaid.

(iii) No person shall be entitled to vote at the election of representatives or delegates or any committee or sub-committee of any Congress organization whatsoever or to be elected as such, or to take part in any meetings of the Congress or any Congress organization or any committee or sub-committee thereof if he has not contributed the yarn subscription or the installments due. Any member who has made a default in the payment of the yarn subscription may have his or her rights restored by paying the subscription in respect of which the default has occurred and the installment for the month than current.

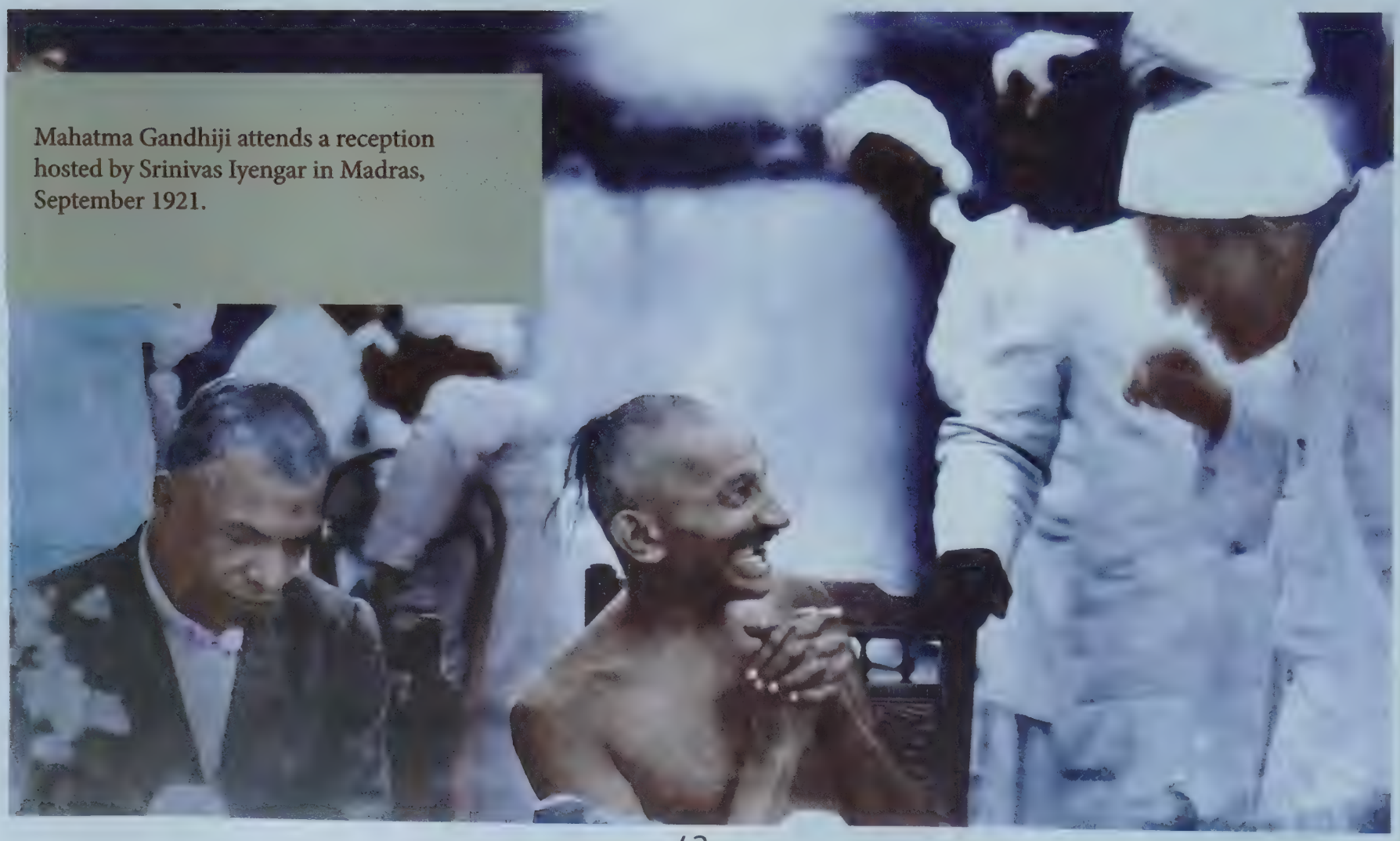
(iv) Every Provincial Congress Committee shall send to the General Secretary, All-India Congress Committee, from month to month returns of membership and of the yarn received by it in virtue of this Article. The Provincial Congress Committee shall contribute ten percent of the yarn subscriptions or their value to the All-India Congress Committee.

Subhas Chandra Bose arrives at the 39th Indian National Congress session in Belgaum, 1924.

RESOLUTION IV
APPRECIATION OF SERVICES

The President next moved the following resolution:-
The Congress places on record its appreciation of the great services rendered to the cause of the Indians overseas by Shrimathi Sarojini Natau who by her energy and devotion endeavored herself to the Indian settlers and by her persuasive eloquence gained a sympathetic hearing from the Europeans there.

The Congress also notes with gratitude the services rendered to the cause of the settlers of Kenya by Mr. Vaze of the Servants of India Society and Pandit Banarasidas Chaturvedi.
The Hindi and Canarese renderings of the above resolution were then read by Pandit Sundar Lal and Syt. K. Mudvedkar respectively. The resolution was carried unanimously by all, standing except Shrimathi Sarojini Devi.



Mahatma Gandhiji attends a reception hosted by Srinivas Iyengar in Madras, September 1921.

Mahatma Gandhiji on the deck of the SS Rajputana, a British passenger ship, before departing from Bombay to England on August 29, 1931.

RESOLUTION V

SYMPATHY WITH THE PEOPLE OF BURMA

S.A.S. TYABJEE, Burma, moved the following resolution:-

The Congress tenders its respectful sympathy to the people of Burma in their troubles and trusts that they will not be awed or cowed down by the repression now going on in their midst.

The Congress notes with regret the tendency among certain Indian settlers in Burma to claim communal representation and strongly advises them not to make any such claim as such separatist tendency is bad in principle.

The resolution was to be mated into Hindi and Canareso by Syts. Sundar Lal and K. Mudvedkar.

Mahatma Gandhiji practising law in South Africa, 1905.

RESOLUTION VI
KOHAT AND GULBARGA RIOTS

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU who was given a big ovation came up the rostrum to move the resolution on Kohat and Gulbarga.

The Congress deplores the riots that recently took place in Kohat, resulting in loss of life and destruction of property including temples and gurudwaras, and is of the opinion that the local authority failed to perform the primary duty of protection of life and property. The Congress further deplores the enforced exodus of the Hindu population from Kohat and strongly urges the Musalmans of Kohat to ensure their Hindu brethren of full protection of their lives and property and to invite them to return to Kohat except upon an honorable invitation from the Kohat Musalmans and upon the advice of Hindu and Musalman leaders. The Congress advises the public, whether Hindu or Musalman, not to accept the finding of the Government of India, as also of others, in the Kohat tragedy and to suspend judgment till this Board appointed by the Unity Conference or some other equally representative body has inquired into the unfortunate event and come to a decision up or it.

The Congress expresses its heartfelt sympathy for the suffering in the Gulbarga riots and condemns the desecration committed on the places of worship in that town.

(The Canarese and Hindi renderings of the above resolution were next read by Srjts. Mudvedkar and another gentleman).

RESOLUTION VII
UNTOUCHABILITY

L.B.Bhopatkar moved the following resolution:

The Congress notes with satisfaction the progress made in Hindu opinion regarding the removal of untouchability but is of the opinion that much yet remains to be done and therefore appeals to the Hindu members of all congress organizations to make a greater effort in the cause. The Congress hereby urges the Hindu members of Provincial Congress Committees to devote greater attention to the amelioration of the lot of the depressed classes by ascertaining their wants such as wells, places of worship, facilities for education, etc, and making provisions for meeting such wants. The congress congratulates the Satyagrahis of Vaikom who are engaged in asserting the right of untouchables through a thoroughfare that is open to caste Hindus, on their non-violence, patience, courage, and endurance and hopes that the State Travancore which is regarded as enlightened will recognize the justice of the Satyagrahis claim and grant speedy relief.

Mahatma Gandhiji in front of the AICC pandal at the Belgaum Congress Session, 1924.

RESOLUTION VIII
INDIANS OVERSEAS.

SAROJINI DEVI who rose amidst enthusiastic cheers and read the following resolution:-

The Congress notes with deep sorrow the increasing disabilities of the settlers overseas and records its opinion that the Indian and Imperial Governments have failed to protect the interest of the settlers which they have repeatedly declared to be their trust. The Congress whilst tendering its sympathy to the settlers in their troubles regrets its inability to render effective assistance till Swaraj has been attained.

The Congress notes with profound dissatisfaction the sanction given by the Governor-general of the Union of South Africa to the Ordinance of the Natal Provincial Legislature depriving the Indians domiciled there of the Municipal franchise, which they have long enjoyed, with impunity. The Congress regards the question of the deprivation of franchise as not only manifestly unjust but also a breach of the agreement of 1924 between the Union Government and the Indian community and the past declarations of the Natal Government.

The Congress is of the opinion that the so-called settlement of the Kenya question is nothing short of the deprivation of the natural and just rights of the Indian settlers in Kenya.

(The above resolution was next translated into Hindi and Canarese by others).

RESOLUTION IX
Congratulations to Akalis

T, PRAKASHAM (Andhra), Madras, who rose amidst cheers, said:-

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:--

The resolution which I place before you runs as follows:-

"The Congress congratulates the Akalis on their patience, endurance, and courage with which they are carrying on their struggle for Gurudwar reform and hopes that these qualities of theirs will withstand and survive the insidious attempts now being made by the Punjab Government to crush the spirit of the brave Akalis."

"The Congress views with horror and indignation the report of over one hundred deaths among the Akali prisoners in Nabha Jail and ex-presses its strongest disapproval of the refusal of the Nabha authorities to permit the Akali Repression Enquiry Committee appointed by the Congress Working Committee, to visit the jail. "

The Congress is of the opinion that the phenomenal mortality among the prisoners is proof of the inhuman conduct of the authorities towards the prisoners.

The Congress tenders its respectful sympathy to the bereaved families."

Mahatma Gandhiji visited Darjeeling i June 1925 at the invitation of Deshbandl Chittaranjan Das.

Mahatma Gandhiji and historian Edmond Private at Vallorbe, Switzerland, December 1931

Mahatma Gandhiji in Shimla, on his way to meet Lord Linlithgow amid World War II, 1940

Mahatma Gandhi honoring Congress volunteers for their service during the Belgaum session, December 1924.

The President next moved the following resolutions one by one put each to vote and declared each carried. The resolutions were read by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in English, by Mudvedkar in Kanarese, and by Pandit Sundar Lal in Hindi.

Resolution X
National Educational Institutions

The Congress is strongly of the opinion that the hope of the future of the country lies in its youth and therefore trusts that the Provincial Committees will strive more vigorously than they have done to keep alive all national educational institutions. But whilst the Congress is of the opinion that existing national educational institutions should be maintained and new ones opened, the Congress does not regard any such institution to be national that does not employ some Indian language as the medium of instruction and does not actively encourage Hindu-Muslim unity, education among untouchables and removal of untouchability; which does not make hand-spinning, carding and training in physical culture and self-defense obligatory; and in which teachers and students over the age of 12 years do not spin for at least half an hour per working day and in which students and teachers do not habitually wear khaddar.

Resolution XI
Paid National Service

Whereas it has been discovered that many otherwise deserving men are unobtainable for national service because of their reluctance to accept remuneration for service, the Congress places on record its opinion that there is only nothing derogatory to one's dignity in accepting remuneration for national service, but the Congress hopes that patriotic young men and women will regard it as an honor to accept maintenance for service faithfully rendered and that those needing or those willing to do service will prefer national to any other service.

The family of Mahatma Gandhiji.

RESOLUTION XII
CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION

In Article XI "Rs. 10 to be altered to Re. 1".

In Article XXIII, add after the first sentence ending with the word "Congress":-

The Treasurers shall be in charge of the funds of the Congress and shall keep proper accounts of them. The General Secretaries shall be in charge of the Office of the All India Congress Committee and shall be responsible for the publication of the report of the proceedings of the preceding session of the Congress and of any special session held in the course of the year, in co-operation with the Reception Committee. Such report shall be published as soon as possible and not later than four months after the session, and shall be offered for sale.

Add at the end of Article XXIII, "and published along with the next Congress report"

RESOLUTION XIII
DRINK AND OPIUM TRAFFIC

The Congress notes with satisfaction that notwithstanding the setback suffered by the campaign against the use of intoxicating drinks and drugs initiated in 1921, Congress workers in several parts of the country have continued it with vigor and determination. The Congress hopes that the peaceful endeavors of workers to wean those who are addicted to the drink or the opium habit from the curse will receive further and greater strength and encouragement than hitherto.

The Congress is of the opinion that the policy of the Government of India in using the drink and drug habit of the people as a source of revenue is detrimental to the moral welfare of the people of India and would therefore welcome its abolition.

The Congress is further of the opinion that the regulation by the Government of India of the opium traffic is detrimental not only to the moral welfare of India but of the whole world and that the cultivation of opium in India which is out of all proportion to medical and scientific requirements should be restricted to such requirements.

Mahatma Gandhiji with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan at a Public meeting in North-West Frontier Province, May 1938

RESOLUTIONS XIV
OFFICE-BEARERS

The President moved the following resolution regarding the election of office-bearers, making a speech in Hindi as follows:-

He read the following resolution put it to vote and declared it carried.
Resolved that the following office-bearers be appointed.
General Secretaries. - Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Shuiab Qureshi and Barjorji Framji Barucha.
Treasurers. Seth Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj.

RESOLUTION XV
NEXT CONGRESS

Resolved that the venue of the next Congress be fixed by the All India Congress Committee.

RESOLUTION XVI
AUDITORS

Resolved that the appointment of auditors be made by the All India Congress Committee.

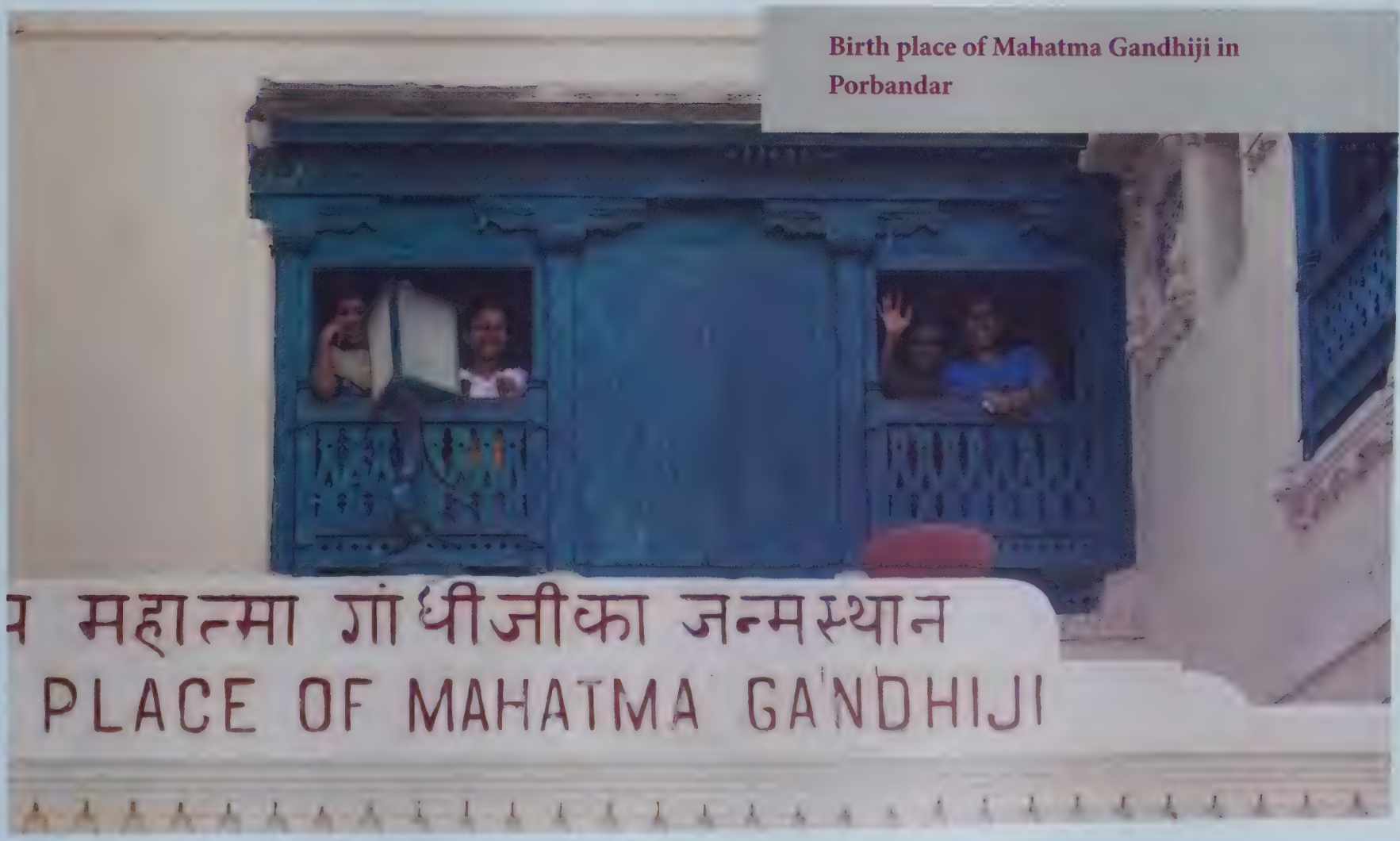
Police controlling a crowd during the funeral of Mahatma Gandhi, New Delhi, January 1948

Mahatma Gandhi with Sarojini Naidu at Boulogne, France, September 1931.

A British parliamentary delegation meets Mahatma Gandhi in Madras, January 1946.

Six-year-old Indira Gandhi visits Mahatma Gandhi during his 21-day fast in Delhi, 1924.

Birth place of Mahatma Gandhiji in Porbandar



THE PRESIDENT'S CONCLUDING ADDRESS

BROTHERS,

I now wish to tell you that whatever gratitude I may feel for you will be wholly inadequate. I do not think any president can expect a greater amount of love than you have shown me. You willingly did all the work that I wanted you to do for me. When I bid you observe silence, you observed silence. You listened to any speech I wanted to make. You wanted me to deliver a written oration. When I wanted to be excused you did not press. And just as you expressed your opinions here quietly, without being noisy, in the Subjects Committee also there was no disturbance. In fact, there might have been disturbance when the bomb of the charkha was dropped in your midst, but you raised no objection and the Subjects Committee also behaved with perfect decorum. I feel this kindness of my brethren to me must be the result of some good deed I may have done in an earlier life. It is my wish that the kindness you have shown towards me you should show towards India, for if I wish to live it is only for India and if I wish to die it is also only for India. Not a leaf stirs without God's will. But every man has a right to ask of God just as a child asks his father what he wants. I have seen that He even grants what I ask Him. What God has willed cannot be otherwise.

I therefore appeal to you, brothers, to gird up your loins

Karamchand Gandhi, the father of Mahatma Gandhi.

Putlibai, mother of Mahatma Gandhiji

for the service of India and stick to the pledge you have taken. I know I took the chair here as President and all of you gave me your love. I desire, naturally, that everyone should praise me, but it does not lead to any achievement. The achievement will come when all of you act as you have pledged. I do not believe that all these tasks are beyond our strength the third task or the fourth or fifth none of them.

Listening to the speech of Bhopatkar gave me a pleasant surprise. He demanded if we wanted the destruction of Hinduism that we treat men as untouchables. I was very pleased. And three shastras have just told you that there is no sanction in Hinduism for untouchability as it is practiced. Is it the same thing as when we say that Hindus and Muslims should not treat one another as enemies but as brothers? Did you not hear what Shaukat Ali said? What did Lajpat Rai say? Zafar Ali Khan raised an objection. I do not see anything to object to, but he is not an enemy of India. You should treat no one as an enemy. The urge in your heart should be to make a brother of an enemy.

Lalaji has invoked a principle, namely, that the question is of the human species as a whole. It is not confined to any particular religion. He said if a Hindu became mad should not a Mussalman swear at him? If Mussalmans abused Ramachandra and Krishna should not Hindus abuse the Prophet? If you cannot decide this matter by forgiving, go to a court or a panchayat. I am a non-cooperator, but if a

Gandhiji defies the Salt Law by collecting salt at Dandi, April 6, 1930.

Mussalman abuses Lord Krishna I will say, "Go to a court, but do not fight. There is nothing in this to fight over." It does not require much time to accept this principle. There should be a fever in us for Swaraj, our hearts should burn for it. When Bhopatkar was speaking I thought of Lokamanya. He was the genius of Swaraj. A remarkable thing I heard about him is that when his wife lay dying he was busy with his work for Swaraj. If such volcanoes are created in our hearts we can do the third thing, the fourth thing, and everything else. That you should wear khadi when you come to Congress is nothing big. That we should give up wearing foreign clothes is nothing big. Today I do not talk about burning foreign cloth. I am today, not the man who in 1921 had caused foreign cloth to be burnt. But we have left peaceful ways. If even today we can bring about complete peace I can again take up what we did in 1921. Under the pretext of burning foreign cloth, we heaped stones to throw at people.

I know we cannot simultaneously do both: invoke truth and practice untruth. If we invoke truth we must not practice untruth, or our bodies will burn up. It burns my heart certainly. I cannot bear it if someone falsely swears by God or takes false pledges. Abuse me by all means, beat me, kick me with shoes, spit at me, I give you my word that I shall not get angry. But take a pledge and not act on it and anger will burn away my whole body. I should wish to die if a woman who is unchaste should parade her chastity in front of me. I should wish to die, again, if a man who is impure should parade his purity in front of me. I would not wish to witness it. If you want the love you have shown me, the kindness you have done me in placing the mantle of responsibility on me, should continue, you should understand this well; keep me in this position if you want to. But it will be even better if the Swarajists and No-changers should walk in unison. As Dr. Besant said, one single stick, by itself, easily breaks, but in a bundle, it is very strong.

Let us not think that the Swarajists are bad people. To a pure heart, all hearts are pure. What are the qualities of the soul? The soul is like marble. Shankaracharya has said that blemishes are not native to it. Blemishes are maya1. If your heart acquires strength you will be able to remove blemishes from others without thinking evil of them. If treachery is the reward of trust, will the man who trusts come to harm? Only the one who commits treachery will come to harm. If I say to Jawaharlal that he is more than a son to me and if I say it only to take some work from him, it is deception. Who am I to venerate Jawaharlal? The world will venerate him, and shower flowers on him.

Today I have to say—not to the one alone or the other alone but to both: During this one year work so hard that our strength should be increased and we should be able to feel that Swaraj is at last within our reach.

I have just poured out my heart to you in my Hindi speech. It is impossible for me to reproduce what I have said in Hindi. One thing however I want to say. I do not think that any chairman, any president, could possibly claim greater courtesy, greater attention, and greater affection than you the delegates have extended to me. I assure you that it has been the greatest delight to me to preside over your deliberations here in the Congress and in the Subjects Committee. Every one of you has readily responded to every call that I have made to you. I know that I have put a heavy strain upon you. I have not walked you. I know I have run you. But what can I do? You are impatient and I am impatient. We want to march towards Swaraj and our march for Swaraj has got to be, not at a snail's pace, but a double quick march; and if we do want to work and march forward, I cannot afford to waste a single minute of your time and my time. Therefore, I have put on speed to the best of my ability and it has been a wonder to me-it has given to me the greatest satisfaction that you have so readily responded to me, so nobly! And you have not done this thing charily but with a magnificent generosity. No one could have possibly claimed more, asked for more, and got more. You have given me all that I could possibly ask of you.

But what I now want to ask you for, is something more, something better, something richer, and that is this: Transfer all this noble affection, all this generosity that you have shown to me to the thing that you and I hold dear, to the thing that alone binds you and me together and that is swaraj. If we want swaraj, we must know the conditions of swaraj. You have endorsed the conditions in the resolutions. Every one of you knows those conditions. Do not leave these conditions here. Take them away with you and fulfill them to the letter and to the spirit and insist upon others to fulfill those conditions, not by force but by love. Exert all the influence and all the pressure which love

Mahatma Gandhiji with Raja Awadhesh Singh, the ruler of Kalakankar in Oudh, British India, 1929.

Mahatma Gandhi at a public meeting with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 1946.

can exert, upon everyone that surrounds you and upon your neighbors. Go throughout your district and spread this message of khaddar, spread this message of Hindu-Muslim unity, and spread this message against untouchability. Go hand in hand with the youngsters of the country and make them the real soldiers of Swaraj.

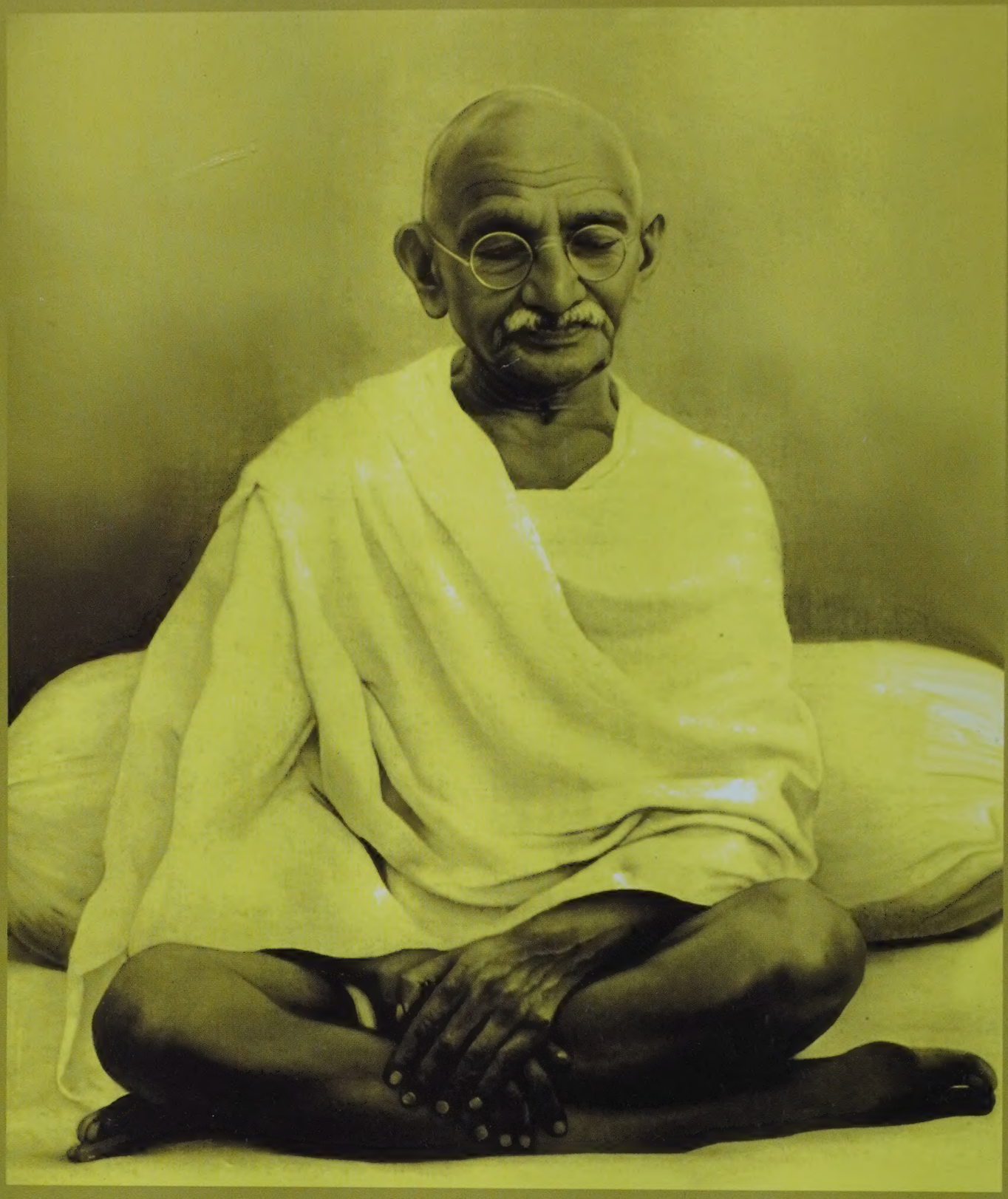
But you will not do it if the Swarajists and No-changers still bear malice against each other if they still have jealousies against one another. It will be possible only if you bury hatred, leave all the jealousies and anger, all those bad influences here. I ask you to bury the hatchet. Bury the jealousies underground and cremate them wherever you like. But take away the sacred resolution that you have passed and say, "Let the heavens fall, but the bond that binds us today, the tie that has bound the Swarajists and the No-changers, shall never snap." My work is finished.

Scarcely had the President got down the rostrum when he was reminded of the duty of the Congress to thank the Reception Committee, and he re-entered the rostrum and said:

I would not have forgiven myself if I had not tendered my thanks to the noble volunteers trained by Dr. Hardikar and to the members of the Reception Committee. But in the mad passion for Swaraj, I forgot all about the volunteers and the members of the Reception Committee.

I know that they have not served in order to receive thanks. The noble service that they have rendered is its own reward. But it was due from me and I would have been guilty of a breach of duty to you if I had not returned thanks to all of you. May God bless all the volunteers and the members of the Reception Committee.

Mahatma Gandhiji with Harijan Leader Thakkar Bapa in Madras, January 1946



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